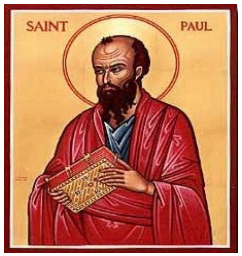
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




## THE PAUL PROBLEM: THE PURPOSEFUL MISCHARACTERIZATION OF ST. PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### HOW MANY DIFFERENT PAULS ARE WRITING SCRIPTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? THE CONTRAST OF THE GNOSTIC PAUL (THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF CHRIST) AND THE ANTI-GNOSTIC PAUL (THE SUBVERTER OF THE GNOSTIC CHRIST AND FOUNDER OF ROMAN CHRISTIANITY)

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**Two figures dominate the pages of the New Testament more than any others: Jesus and Paul. Few Christians ever study the New Testament Scriptures close enough to discern that these two characters and their Spiritual messages are quite different from each other in many ways. In fact, it is possible with enlightened study to discern that there are two different "Pauls" and two different Spiritual messages from two different Pauls in the New Testament. Few Christians have ever seen that two different messages regarding Christ emanate from the New Testament Paul and that these messages and teachings contradict and oppose each other completely from beginning to end. Modern Bible scholars today are alerting the masses to the fact that there exists numerous anti-gnostic passages in the Pauline corpus of writings that have been inserted and interpolated into the authentic Pauline Gnostic Scriptures and texts by someone other than the real historical St. Paul. Even Bible scholars who maintain Pauline authorship of many Epistles that carry Paul's name have noted significant differences between the world of thought in these authentic Pauline Gnostic letters and the forged and falsified anti-gnostic Pauline Epistles in the New Testament. These scholars of the Bible today tell us that there suddenly exists throughout the authentic Gnostic Pauline Epistles with their doctrine of wisdom many places where anti-gnostic texts and dogmas are dispersed among the texts in order to confuse the reader as to the Gnostic nature of the authentic Pauline Epistles. Today modern Bible scholars tell us that six of the thirteen Epistles that carry Paul's name are recognized to be forgeries of letters that definitely were not written by the Gnostic Paul himself.**

**Thus, there are two very different "Pauls" in the New Testament. First, there is a Gnostic St. Paul and a "Petrine" Paul which is a later attempt to portray the Gnostic Paul as being anti-gnostic by Roman Christianity which was forged by them at a later date. For almost two thousand years, Roman Christianity, and her daughter, Protestant Christianity, have read the Pauline Epistles and taught their congregates that the Apostle Paul is the opponent of Gnostic Christianity and its "Secret Wisdom." As Christians, we are told that Paul preaches a historical Christ Jesus who was crucified on an old rugged cross in I Corinthians 2:2 and proclaims a resurrection of the dead after the demise of the biological body which is used by the Soul as the vehicle for its Spiritual evolution. In other words, the St. Paul of the New Testament preaches traditional Roman Christianity along with its dogmas and doctrines which oppose the earliest expression of Gnostic Christianity that existed until the 5th century of the Common Era. Long before the four gospels were penned, it was St. Paul who supposedly, according to Roman exegesis of the Pauline Epistles, fought the good fight of faith against the Gnostic Christians who St. Paul supposedly called the**

**"Ministers of Satan." We are led to believe by textual eisegesis by the Roman Church that the supposedly false apostles mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11:13 were Gnostic Christians who deceptively passed themselves off as apostles of Christ , when the truth of the matter is that the Gnostic Paul penned that verse and intended it describe the "Petrines" of the Jerusalem Church as well as those who taught a literal and historical Jesus Christ. Of course, history reveals to us that Orthodox Roman Christianity will follow in the steps of the Jerusalem Church and teach the dogmas of the Petrine Jerusalem Church and their literal and historical interpretation of "the Christ. "One thing is for certain, a person does not have to look long or hard today to find Christian commentators that maintain from reading the Pauline corpus of Epistles that St. Paul repudiated the secret wisdom, gnosis, and knowledge that the earliest Christians Gnostics taught before the rise of Roman Christian orthodoxy. But did he really?**

**If this Petrine and later Roman Christian view of St. Paul is accurate, then it is hard to account for the fact that when the Gnostic gospels were uncovered in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1949, that most all of them claimed that St. Paul and his Epistles were the primary source of their Gnostic theology. In spite of what the Roman Church Fathers and heresy hunters said in their writings, it appears from the Gnostic gospels and writings, that Gnostic Christians and leaders, instead of repudiating St. Paul as their obstinate anti-gnostic opponent, claimed St. Paul proudly as a Gnostic initiate and as their apostle. To these earliest Gnostic Christians that existed long before the rise of Roman Christian Orthodoxy, St. Paul was their "Gnostic apostle." This description of St. Paul not made by the Gnostics as we might expect. This description of St. Paul as a Gnostic is found in the confessions of Irenaeus in his Adversus Haereses (Against Heresies), a five-volume work written by St. Irenaeus opposing Christian Gnosticism in the second century who was one of the chief heresiologists who fought against the Christian Gnostics in the later part of the 2nd century and early part of the 3rd century of the Christian era. Clement of Alexandria, Egypt, an important Gnostic Church Father, declared in his Stromata that the famous Valentinus was a hearer of Theudas, and Theudas was in turn, a first-hand disciple of the Gnostic St. Paul. Archaeological discoveries reveals that Valentinus, the best known and for a time most successful early Christian gnostic theologian, alludes to St. Paul very often in his writings, calling him "the apostle." When all is said and done, the Nag Hammadi Gnostic discoveries reveals just how profound is the Pauline influence on the Christian Gnostics in the first and second century of the Christian Gnostic tradition. Central to this influence of St. Paul among the Gnostic Christians is the "mystical" themes found in Pauline theology in his Epistles where believers are said to participate in the baptism, death, and resurrection of Christ. All through these Gnostic writings discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, allusions to Pauline "mysticism" and the Pauline Epistles and Scriptures are to be found from beginning to end. This presence of Pauline Scriptures and dogmas running through the whole of these Gnostic writings discovered at Nag Hammadi is both unexplainable and perplexing, given that testimony of the Church Fathers who endeavored to paint St. Paul as being anti-gnostic. Also amazing is the fact that all through the Nag Hammadi Gnostic writings, there are to be found allusions constantly to other New Testaments Books that many attribute to Pauline authorship or possible Pauline authorship like Romans, I and 2nd Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and the Book of Hebrews. It is in these Pauline writings, or writings of others Gnostic writers who were pro-Pauline or Paulinists, we find such dogmas as immersion and baptism being described as a "dying with Christ;" Paul's teaching on a person's resurrection with Christ, and Paul's exhortation on participation in the body of Christ. Examination of these new archaeological discoveries involving these early Gnostic Christian writings, have revealed that it was Irenaeus who so terribly and deceitfully slandered these Gnostic Christians when he said that all Gnostic exegesis and Gnostic teaching was based upon unwritten oral traditions and sources not contained in Scriptures. The actual archaeological discoveries of these Gnostic Gospels and other Gnostic writings reveal otherwise. Christians and Christian writers who have been swayed by Irenaeus and his slanderous writings for the last eighteen hundred years, tended to accept Irenaeus' judgment of the Gnostics without question when he characterized the Gnostic Christians being opposed to the authentic Christian "tradition" which was considered Roman Christian. Without a doubt, it was these earliest Gnostic Christians where were the authentic Christians long before the rise of Roman Christianity. The Gnostic Christians responded to such false charges by maintaining that the sources for their mystical and metaphysical religious traditions and dogmas were Paul's own personal letters and writings that contained within them heavy amounts of Gnostic teaching, Gnostic theology, and Paul's own secret wisdom tradition.**

**Before us then, is a war of exegesis of the Sacred New Testament Scriptures shared in common between both theological camps, the Gnostic Christians and the anti-Gnostic Roman Christians. This is described today by modern Bible scholars to be the war for the interpretation of Scripture, the Gnostic Paulines on one side and the Petrine Roman Christians on the other side. This war raged not only in the 2nd century of the Christian Era, but this same war over the true exegesis of the Scriptures by the Gnostic Christians who resorted to a mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical exegesis of the Sacred Scriptures, and a false literal and historical exegesis of the Scriptures by the Roman literalizers and historicizers of divine revelation, exits in our day as well. The warning from 2nd Peter 3:16-17 comes to mind where Peter cautions his fellow Christians that the "unlearned and unstable" brethren have "distorted" the letters of "our beloved brother Paul." Even at times, as seen in the admission of various Church Fathers, for example Irenaeus and Tertullian, many controversies raged between anti-Gnostic Roman Christianity and Gnostic Christianity regarding not only over Pauline pro-Gnostic exegesis of New Testament texts, but included as well the charges by Gnostic Christians that Orthodox Roman Christianity was guilty of interpolation where they added anti-gnostic Scriptures to the seven authentic Gnostic Pauline Epistles as well as altered other Scriptures from the hands of the Gnostic St. Paul. Thanks to the archaeological discoveries in the last sixty years, we can today trace the two antithetical traditions of Pauline exegesis in the New Testament that emerged from the late first century through the second century of the Christian era. Each of these traditions claim, Gnostic Christianity and later Roman Christianity, claimed to be the authentic expression of Christianity. In spite of this, with the rise and authority of Roman Christianity, orthodox Roman Christians from the 2nd century onward were taught to both interpret and understand the Pauline Epistles anti-gnostically, even thought St. Paul was a Gnostic Christian and opposed Petrine Christianity which would later be adopted by Roman Christianity as well as seen in their literal and historical exegesis of the Scriptures and teaching of the literal and historical Jesus Christ. Opposed to this, Gnostic Christians were taught to read, understand, and interpret the Pauline Epistles gnostically. Hence, we discover in New Testament two conflicting images of St. Paul in the New Testament: the Gnostic Paul who was the "apostle" to the Gnostic Christians and teacher of secret wisdom to Gnostic initiates on the one hand, and the anti-gnostic Paul familiar to most of us today from the Roman Christian tradition, on the other.**

**It has been hypothesized by scholars such as Hyam Maccoby in his Paul and Hellenism and Elaine Pagels, with her The Gnostic Gospels and The Gnostic Paul, as well as the mystical authors Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy in their The Jesus Mysteries and Jesus And The Lost Goddess: The Secret Teachings Of The Original Christians, that Paul of**

**Tarsus was a Gnostic who developed the early Christian church as a mystery religion with a Jewish flavor, and that elements of this church would, over time, come to forget or misunderstand the mystery elements in the teachings and earliest New Testament writings of the Gnostic Paul. Consequently, over time these Gnostic Christians would come to largely abandon their Jewish foundation, and in so doing, come to mistakenly accept and adopt a literal and historical interpretation of the Scriptures and texts. The argument for Paul being a Gnostic is based on arguments about the authorship of the Pauline Epistles. With only seven of St. Paul's Epistles being seen by most modern Bible scholars today as authentic, the Pastoral Epistles (I and 2nd Timothy, and Titus), are generally acknowledged as being clearly anti-gnostic. In these Epistles, the Gnostic Paul is falsely portrayed as an antagonist against the "false teachers" who "set forth fables and endless genealogies." Given that the Epistles to Timothy have been forged by anti-Gnostics and are grouped with other Pauline writings in the New Testament, the typical reader of the New Testament assumes the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, both in terms of Pauline authorship and their presentation of St. Paul as being anti-gnostic. Hence, Paul is claimed through such textual forgery as the ally of Rome against the Gnostics. This is all together rather strange given that the Gnostic Valentinus, who once in his life came close to being assigned the prestigious position of Bishop or Pope of Rome, cited the same books being of Pauline authorship as did the earliest known Pauline collection attested from Alexandria, Egypt. It needs be said that the second Epistle to the Thessalonians clearly refutes certain gnostic interpretations of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians which is one of the Gnostic Paul's authentic Epistles. Most confusing then is that some see St. Paul as being a Gnostic Christians while others see him being anti-Gnostic. What is going on? How could St. Paul have become to both theological camps, the Gnostic Christians as well as the anti-gnostic Roman Christianity, the hero of both opposing theological camps in the earliest centuries of the Christian Era? How could St. Paul be claimed to be the apostle of the Gnostic Christians who read and interpreted Sacred Scripture allegorically, mystically, and metaphysically as well as Roman Christians who read and interpreted Sacred Scripture literally and historically at the same time? Textual forgery of the earlier Gnostic Paul's writings and Epistles is the answer.**

**The answers for this enigma becomes clear once we realize that the Gnostic Christians taught. First of all Gnostic Christianity taught that all of humanity was divided into 3 groups of people. Human beings, consisting of flesh, Soul, and Spirit, or the Divine Spark of God within them, is divided into classes representing each of these elements. The purely corporeal, otherwise called "hylics," lived completely in the flesh of their bodies under the total sway and domination of their animal natures. These people were not destined for salvation and eternal life following the death of the animal body. Gnostics, otherwise called "pneumatics," had awakened to the divine within them in this Earthly life and knowingly nurtured the growth and evolution of God and the Divine Spark within them and their salvation and eternal life following death was certain. Lastly, there were the Christians who stood in between these two groups, otherwise called "psychics," who could attain a lesser salvation through faith. Given this designation, it is easy to see how the "Jesus Story" worked on two levels at once. First, the "Jesus Story" was to be viewed, read, and understood as an introductory story for Psychic Christians initiated into the Outer or Lesser Mysteries. It was here that the Scriptures were read literally and historically, and from them ethical and moral teachings were basically the goal to be gathered from a literal and historical rendering of the texts. This same "Jesus Story" was to be viewed, read, and understood by Pneumatic Christians who were initiated into the Inner or Greater Mysteries as a mystical allegory of the incarnation, descent, evolution, and eventual ascension of the Soul. Although the "Jesus Story" was understood in two completely different ways, the story remained the same and so did the Scriptures, or at least they were supposed to have remained the same. As we will see, that did not happen. Thus, we see, the original intention was that both the Gnostic Christians and Roman Christians could share the same Scriptures; they only read and interpreted them differently.**

**According to the Gnostic Christians, and characteristic of Gnostic exegesis of Scripture, Paul's Epistles were likewise designed to work and teach on two levels at once. Theodotus of Byzantium, an elementary Gnostic writer from the late 2nd century, said that "each one knows the Lord in his own way: and not all know him alike." So, on the one hand, the Gnostics taught to the Psychic Christians the "Jesus Story" where the Christ was born according to flesh and was destined to suffer and eventually become "Christ crucified." To Pneumatic Christians, those with a higher Spiritual maturity, desiring the strong meat of the Word of God, the Gnostic taught Christ "pneumatically" or "according to the Spirit." Each level of initiate would take from the teachings whatever they were wise enough to be able to hear and discern. The Gnostic Christian would say that St. Paul, when he wrote 1 Corinthians 2:14, had in view the Psychi Christian: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Thus like the later gospels, Paul's Epistles were encoded with secret teachings so that uninitiated readers, the Psychic Christians, would hear one thing and the initiated readers would hear another. Only those initiated into the secret oral teachings of the Inner Mysteries, the Pneumatic Christians, were capable of understanding Paul's deeper Spiritual meaning veiled in the texts and Scriptures. Gnostic Christians claimed that Psychic Christians, like the Petrines Peter, James, and John of the Jerusalem Church, make the mistake of reading the Sacred Scriptures only literally and historically. Only when initiated into the deeper Inner or Greater Mysteries, could a person learn to read Paul's letters on the symbolic level, as the Gnostic St. Paul intended. Gnostic Christians taught that only the pneumatic reading of the Sacred Scriptures yields "the Spiritual truth" instead of its mere outward literal and historical perception which was never the deeper or intended meaning of the Scriptures nor the intent of its writer. As we read the Pauline Epistles, it become glaringly clear that Paul displays his disappointment in wanting to give his followers a deeper Pneumatic teaching but finding them carnal, he cannot. Hence, the Gnostic Paul can only give them the most elementary and basic of Christian doctrines since they are not initiated into Christ. Instead of strong meat, or pneumatic teaching, the Gnostic Paul has to given then Sarkic (fleshly) dogma diluted down to a literal or historical rendering, otherwise know as the "milk" of the word which is equivalent to a 3rd grade level of reading of the Sacred Scriptures. Such a diluted and diminished presentation of Spiritual truth when rendered only in a literal and historical perception of the texts, only provided for its hearers moral and ethical lessons, omitting as it does, Spiritual manna for the evolution of the evolving Souls of mankind in their incarnated Earthly lives. Thus we see, there exists two levels of reading and understanding within the St. Paul Epistles, a process that is complicated by untold numbers of textual forgeries and interpolations at the hands of both the earlier Petrine Jerusalem Chruch, themselves the original literalizers and false historicizers of the "Christ Story" and "Jesus Story," as well as the later Roman Church Fathers and their monks who wish to conceal and veil, as did the Jerusalem congregation before them, the Gnosticism of St. Paul, the apostle to the non-Jews of the known world in his day.**

**Let us never forget that there are two levels in which the "Jesus Story" and the "Christ Story" is to be understood. We all begin to read the "Jesus Story" as if it is a literal and**

**historical story. The literal and historical interpretation of the "Jesus Story" is compared in Scriptures to the "milk" of the Word. This infantile reading of a mystical and metaphysical Cosmic drama of the Soul that progressively evolves into a deeper Spiritual level of understanding and interpretation of Scripture, is later compared to "strong meat" in the Scripture. Historical and traditional Roman Christian exegesis of the gospels and Pauline Epistles has for 1,800 years resulted in only a literal and historical understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures and texts, hardly ever obtaining or experiencing an allegorical, mystical, or metaphysical interpretation of the Scriptures and texts. This means that as Christians, we have been led our whole lives to drink Spiritual "milk" intended for babies in Christ and never once been fed on the "strong meat" that God intended we partake during out adult lives. In so doing, we have never progressed to the true Spiritual depth of what the Gnostic Paul attempted to convey to the Gentile Churches like the Church in Corinth to which he preached. To lives our lives, never obtaining the deeper teachings of the Word of God is not the way God intended for our Souls to evolve, nor the way delineated in the Scriptures that we are to obtain Spiritual maturity. As all of nature evolves and matures, only to be reborn anew, so it is with humanity and its understanding of Sacred Scripture as well. As a child, we are given the "milk" of a literal and historical understanding of the Scriptures in the Bible. This is necessary for babies, but not the intended goal for physical maturation. Nor is it the intended goal of Spiritual maturation and evolution as well. This very same Bible tells us in I Corinthians 2: 14 that its Scriptures are to be "Spiritually discerned" or "pneumatically discerned." God never intended that we remain our whole lives Spiritual babies, never progressing beyond a carnal approach to life nor never progressing from a literal or historical understanding of the Bible and its Scriptures. We were not incarnated into this Earthly life to never progress beyond a 3rd grade level in our comprehension of the Scriptures.**

**With the above as a short introduction to the Paul Problem in the New Testament, a fuller exposition of the problem is necessary and mandatory before we proceed with this website. Let it be known that before we can reveal the true Paul and his Gnostic gospel and teachings concerning the indwelling Christ as opposed the false Paul of Rome's invention associated with a supposed literal and historical Jesus Christ in the New Testament, owing to the numerous forged Scriptures attributed to the false Paul at the hands of both the Petrines of Jerusalem and later Rome, we must possess the truth of the history of the early Jerusalem congregation and the Gnostic Paul who wrote seven authentic Gnostic Epistles in the New Testament which never taught a literal and historical Messiah-Christ as the later forged Epistles of Paul will be made to appear and endorse. To this true St. Paul, the apostle to the Gnostic Christians, we now turn as we confirm from the discoveries of the Gnostic Christian texts at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, that in the first century of the Christian era, the term “Gnostic” denoted a heterodox segment of the diverse new Christian community. Among early followers of Christ it appears there were groups who delineated themselves from the greater household of the Petrine Jerusalem Church by claiming not simply a belief in Christ and his message, but a "special witness" or revelatory experience of the divine. It was this experience or gnosis that set the true follower of Christ apart from those associated with the Jerusalem congregation and men like Peter, James, and John. These Christians held a conviction that a direct, personal and absolute knowledge of the authentic Spiritual and metaphysical truths of mankind's existence is accessible to all human beings, and, moreover, that the attainment of such mystical knowledge regarding mankind's true reality must always constitute the supreme achievement of human life. Again, due to the most difficult task of deconstructing and dismantling the Apostle Paul before your eyes with what comes later in this Website, it is of the greatest importance that we see through the deception and lies fed us about the supposed Paul in the New Testament through textual forgery and dishonesty with the New Testament's texts. Only by exposing what is not true, can we repent of erroneous beliefs, and come to the knowledge and belief in what is true.**

**WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO STUDY THE PAUL PROBLEM WEBSITE**

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**Now, being full convinced that there exists a second Paul in the New Testament, we move on to the other Paul problem in the New Testament; namely, contrasting the message of the Romanized Paul as contrasted with the message of Christ. According to the traditions of ant-Gnostic Roman Christianity, Jesus Christ was supposedly a historical charismatic prophetic figure from Galilee. St. Paul, according to this same anti-gnostic tradition of Roman Christianity, is a Greek-speaking intellectual and letter writer who was made at many places in the New Testament the supposed promoter of a literal and historical Jesus Christ to the non-Jewish populations of the world. As we have seen, however, having done the study above, we have come to clearly see that the anti-gnostic Paul and anti-gnostic Christ was not the the real Christ nor Paul of history. This fact brings into question the reliability of the gospels and messages put into the mouths of both Paul and Jesus by Rome in the New Testament texts which they presented to the world. We must now take interest in the various different gospels presented in the New Testament, especially the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is characterized against the gospel of the anti-gnostic Paul of Rome's theological imagination.**

**With the discoveries of the Nag Hammadi Library, a collection of thirteen ancient Gnostic codices containing over fifty texts in upper Egypt in 1945 and their final translation in the 1970's, a major re-evaluation of early Christian history as well as the figure of both Paul and Jesus in the New Testament has been called for by both Bible scholars and researchers alike. These scholars tell us that the very nature of the early Church and Christ as presented by traditional Roman Christian exegesis of the New Testament as well as supposed traditional Roman Church history needs a complete reevaluation given that we see today, like never before, that it was Gnostic Christianity that comprised the earliest expression of Christianity and not Roman Christianity as we have been led to believe. We must come to grips with abundant textual forgery in the New Testament, as well as the mountains of deception that exists in the New Testament, all of which was intended to promote Roman Christianity over Gnostic Christianity. With the Nag Hammadi discoveries and its texts, new perspectives and questions have arisen that has brought forth varying and different responses to similar questions asked before these more recent discoveries of these Gnostic Christians texts and gospels. The old answers given us by Roman Christianity do not work today. In fact, given what is to be learned from the Nag Hammadi Gnostic scrolls alone, today's answers to these older questions not only challenge, but overthrow all of the ancient understandings of the nature of Christ, the identity of St. Paul in the New Testament, and Christian history, which we see clearly today, has been deceptively presented to the masses by Rome over the last 1,800 years. At the heart of the Pauline Problem is the mischaracterization of the Gnostic Paul's message which was addressed above, but the substitution of a false Pauline message put into the mouth of Rome's Paul that contradicts**

**not only the the message of salvation by the Gnostic Paul long before the rise of Roman Orthodoxy, but the gospel message of the New Testament Christ as well. Rome has "another gospel" which has replaced both the Gnostic Paul's gospel and the gospel of Christ as well. Let us not forget the unforgettable words of the Gnostic Paul in Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."**

**What was the relationship between St. Paul and Christ, and was the St. Paul of the New Testament always a true follower of Jesus, or did he at times oppose what Jesus taught? Did the Paul of the New Testament given us by Rome teach the same gospel and Spiritual message as "the Christ" in the New Testament? Or, do we find in the New Testament a completely different and opposing teaching and salvation message from Rome's anti-gnostic Paul which makes us think that we have a "Romanized Paul" on our hands in many places which often contradicts and opposes the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament? Could the fraudulent misrepresentation of the true Gnostic Paul by Rome be the reason for the numerous contradictions and Scriptural alterations we find in the New Testament supposedly from the pen of this St. Paul? Could it be the culprit here is Rome and their anti-Gnostic Paul and not the true Gnostic Paul of history? Why do we find two different opposing and conflicting gospels and Spiritual messages that supposedly came from this same "one" person named Paul in the New Testament? Could this be why the New Testament Paul appears theologically schizophrenic in the New Testament and in teaches often in opposition to Jesus in many of the things that he taught and said? Could it be that the "true Paul" was more of a Gnostic and "metaphysical" believer that taught a Spiritual gospel in agreement with the message of the Christ and it is the anti-gnostic Paul of Roman creative theology that is the false Paul who opposes the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament? Is it the anti-gnostic message of Rome and their false St. Paul which opposes the teachings of Jesus and not the message of St. Paul found in the unforged texts in his seven authentic Gnostic Epistles? Is the message of the anti-gnostic Paul of Rome's creative genius a forgery and outright example of the ingenious invention of Scriptural texts? Could it be that the Romanization of the Gnostic Paul is the reason for the alterations and purposeful changes made to the New Testament and Paul's Gnostic texts? Could this textual forgery by Rome of the New Testament gospels and the Gnostic Paul's Epistles be the real reason for the foundation and creation of a new and competing world religion that comes to be called Christianity, a religion that opposes almost all of what Biblical Judaism stood for and taught along with what the Gnostic Christians also taught?**

**It is commonly assumed by most Christians who are only remotely familiar with the Bible and its texts, carrying the Bible as they do to Church and using it usually only one hour a week, that St. Paul's relationship to the message of Jesus as the Christ was one of a faithful follower. Not being familiar with extra-biblical history, and possessing the keys that open the Bible's texts mystically and metaphysically, they make the erroneous assumption that St. Paul was very interested in the life and teaching of a supposed historical Jesus of Nazareth. Most Christians assume that St. Paul held Jesus of Nazareth in the highest regard and tried to base his own life and teaching on what he knew of this Jesus. Such is not the case. Could such an idea and assumed picture of the historical St. Paul and the inherited normal "tradition" and "testimony" regarding the St. Paul of the New Testament be fraudulent today? Has the New Testament faithfully committed down through the ages the testimony of the Petrine Jewish Church of Jerusalem as they knew and understood St. Paul, or could the story and truth regarding the true St. Paul have been purposefully altered by the Petrines and later by Rome to make St. Paul the hero of Gentile Christianity and the promoter of a literal and historical Jesus when the truth of the matter is that he was not? Arthur Drews in his The Christ Myth maintains that the historical Paul did not know of a historical Jesus who would have supposedly lived only twenty years before his time. Arthur Drews maintains that the historical Paul, in this case not the Gnostic Paul, but the later Romanized Paul, invented the whole Christian faith by Judaizing the whole Adonis cult. Other modern scholars like R. Bultmann stated that the St. Paul was only interested in the death and resurrection of Jesus and therefore shows no knowledge of a supposed historical Jesus prior to his death. Bultmann in such a comment refers to the true Gnostic Paul. In other words, the supposed Earthly life and preaching of Jesus played no role or importance with Paul. The historical Paul never saw or heard of a literal or historical Jesus. What the historical St. Paul knew about Jesus depended either on reports and formulated traditions or on his immediate experience with the Lord through a vision. There were no written gospels in Paul's day. The collection of "sayings" of the Lord from Ancient Egypt, called the *Logia of the Lord*, became attributed to Christ long before the time of Paul's birth. These "sayings" in Paul's day attributed to Jesus, now called (Q) which were used by the later Gospel writers Matthew and Luke, mattered little to the Gnostic Paul. It appears that Paul says almost nothing about the crucifixion of a historical Jesus, only that it occurred. He never tell us that this crucifixion and resurrection was a historical event. In fact, it appears from his writings that these events were meant to be interpreted metaphysically. allegorically, and Spiritually than literally or historically. None of the details regarding a literal or historical crucifixion or resurrection of Jesus can be found in the authentic Pauline Epistles. None of the details that appear in the later four gospel accounts are ever found mentioned by the Gnostic Paul in his authentic Epistles. Since I Thessalonians 2:14-16, where the Jews are blamed for the crucifixion of a historical Jesus is an interpolation and a later addition to the Pauline Epistles by Rome, then we cannot say that Paul blamed either the Jews or the Romans for the crucifixion. This makes sense if the crucifixion of Christ is mystical, not literal or historical. According to 1 Corinthians 2:8, those who "crucified the Lord of glory" were the "rulers of this age," itself a reference to the invisible malign principalities and powers that were at work in this Cosmic event regarding the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ and Divine Mind in "matter," i.e., humanity. When Paul mentions "Christ, our paschal lamb" in I Corinthians 5:7, he probably reflects knowledge that Christ's death occurred Astronomically during the Passover at the Vernal Equinox, but gives no further information about the event itself. It was again at this Vernal Equinox that the Sun passed over the "cross" in the sky as it rained own its life-giving rays and energy to Mother Earth and all of its life forms. Paul never describes the Lord he saw, nor does hid ever mention a empty tomb. Nor does the list of appearance stories in 1 Corinthians 15 coincide with the appearance stories in the later gospels. Anything that this Gnostic St. Paul knew of a historical Jesus before the crucifixion is exceedingly difficult to determine, because all we know is what St. Paul mentions in his Epistles. It is a given that the Pauline Epistles would mention that Jesus is a Jew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a son of David, and born under the law. These are not historical facts, but rather concepts attributed to every Jewish child born in Israel. More interesting for our concern is the fact that St. Paul never mentions Jesus' virgin birth, his historical baptism by John, nor any of the deeds of Jesus' Earthly ministry or presumed miracles, a literal crucifixion, a literal burial, a literal resurrection, and a literal ascension. If we only had Paul's litters, we would never know that Jesus Christ told parables or that his message was centered upon the news of the kingdom of God. Paul never mentions Jesus' teaching. This remarkable absence of Jesus' teaching and sayings from St. Paul's letters and the total neglect of his Earthly ministry and limited references to his passion are the causes of concern for New Testament believers. Modern scholars are slowing coming around in our day to admit that St. Paul, in truth, the Gnostic Paul, was not interest in "the historical Jesus." This view, advocated already by Albert Schweitzer, was developed especially by Rudolf Butlmann who saw Paul's theology is neither an extension nor an elaboration of Jesus' own message. This is not surprising, given as we have seen that much of the characterization of St. Paul in the New Testament comes to us from Petrine and later Roman textual forgery, addition, and substitution of the Bible's texts. For that reason, the**

**message and teachings emanation from the Romanized Paul of textual forgery, is shown to have a completely different message than did the teachings and messages emanating from the mouth of the Gnostic Paul as well as Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Due to the abundant textual manipulation and forgery in the New Testament, Jesus' words along with the teachings of the Gnostic Christ did not come to comprise the bulk of the message of the New Testament and the Pauline Epistles. At the center of our current study, when the message of Jesus' words are put under the microscope of critical scrutiny, they are found to differ considerably from what the later Romanized St. Paul would teach and say in the New Testament. The gospel of St. Paul the Gnostic and the gospel of Jesus are, when compared to the gospel of the Romanized Paul in the New Testament, found often at odds, conflicting, and contradicting. In other words, again we find "another gospel" put into the mouth of the Romanized and forged St. Paul that is quite different from the complementing gospels first taught by the Gnostic Paul as well as gospel taught by the New Testament Christ when personified as Jesus. Together the present the complete divinization of mankind; the internal transformation of mankind into Christlikeness, first within, then the outward expression of this Christlikeness through obedience to the Torah and good works detailed in the mitzvoth. This explains why the Gnostic Paul was not interested in a "fleshly Christ," that is, a historical Christ of misinterpreted Scriptures as seen with the Petrines of Jerusalem. Nor would he have been interested in a later one by Orthodox Roman Christianity as well. .**

**Most Christians are unaware that the traditional inherited Chistianized picture of St. Paul has not gone unchallenged down through Church history. Indeed, in recent years quite a different view of St. Paul has come to the forefront of modern Biblical studies. Far from meekly being a follower of Jesus as the Christ, it has been and it suggested by many scholars of high repute, that St. Paul in the New Testament, or the Romanized Paul of Roman creative theology, was a religious innovators who brought into a Gnostic expression of Christianity all sorts of ideas and emphases that complicated and spoiled original Gnostic Christianity as it existed as far back as the Essene Christians. This view of the Romanized St. Paul has been put forth forcefully to the masses over the centuries by many who, throughout history, have enforced a religious agenda instead of the truth concerning St. Paul, a truth that the vast majority of Christendom today does not even know exits. I, as well as many other scholars, have located personally and collected vast amounts of information that has been amassed over the centuries that reveals a completely different perspective on this St. Paul who is the "apostle to the nations" and Christianity. If you begin a comprehensive study into this area of Christian history, and have the ability to go beyond the "spin doctoring" by Christians religious authorities over the ages, you can find "Earth shattering evidence" that brings the traditional Orthodox Christian understanding of St. Paul crashing to the ground. The many "true followers of Jesus" as well as scholars throughout history who have concealed the truth about St. Paul have in our day come together in a unanimous conclusion that informs the interested reader that many of the "unhealthy" and "unpleasant" aspects of Christianity "find their origin in the Romanized Paul." Among the things for which this Romanized Paul may be held partly responsible are negative attitudes toward women, sexuality and the human body, and of course the Jews. But, I must ask: "Is this the true Paul, or a false presentation of him through textual forgery?**

**The fullest and most forceful scholarly presentation of St. Paul over the last few years was by a well known Jewish scholar called Myam Maccoby. In his significantly entitled book The Mythmaker: Paul and the Invention of Christianity, Hyam Maccoby concluded that it was Paul, or should I say the Romanized Paul, who founded Christianity as we know it today and as it is found expressed in the New Testament today. This Romanized Paul is shown to be the invention of textual forgery and manipulation, so much so, as it gave Roman creative genius to craft for themselves the type of Christianity that they wanted and would later enforce upon the ignorant masses. Notice if you will, Christianity as it exists today could never be considered the birth-child of the Gnostic Paul, only the Romanized Paul. As well, as we will come to see when we contrast the gospel message of Jesus when contrasted with the gospel message of the Romanized Paul, Christianity in the world, for the most part, does not follow the message and teachings of Jesus, it follows the teachings of Roman and Protestant Christianity instead. Hyam Maccoby stated in his book that it was Rome that overhauled and worked-over St. Paul, and in so doing, we obtain the Paul of the anti-Gnostic Epistles and with him, a completely separate and different Spiritual message that is unlike that formerly preached and taught by the Gnostic Paul as well as the Christ in the gospels.**

**Let me stop right here and recommend for all interested readers that there is probably not a more earth shattering expose on the truth about the Apostle Paul and his transformation in altered Scripture ever done to my knowledge than Maccoby's book and I personally consider Hyam Maccoby's The Mythmaker: Paul And The Invention Of Christianity a "must read" for anyone wanting to know the truth behind this anti-gnostic transformation of the Gnostic Paul into the Romanized Paul in the New Testament Scriptures. This book will show you the battle of not only the competing messages in the Bible between the gospels of Jesus and the Gnostic Paul, but the Romanized Paul as well. If you would like to read and see for yourself the history of scholarly discussion of the Jesus and the 2 Pauls and the problems that these three figures present in the New Testament, then I strongly this book to you. This schism between Peter and Paul, the Petrines and the Paulines, the anti-Gnostics and the Gnostic Christians, is traceable all the way back to F. C. Baur, the influential nineteenth-century Tubingen scholar, who postulated a major divergence in the early Christian Church church between the Jerusalem apostles (the Petrines) and Paul (the Paulines).**

**It is not only scholars who have argued these things in Scripture. Many ordinary Christians, as well as non-Christians, have found Paul extremely difficult to read and understand, and feel that Christianity would be very much better off without some of the dogmas that "he propounds (e.g., the divinity of Jesus and Jesus' death as a blood sacrifice), not to mention his teachings on sex, women, and slaves. They would be quite happy if we could keep Jesus, but quietly lose Paul. I can add my own personal testimony of finding the same as I began a serious study of Paul many years ago and I uncovered what many before me had found existing "outside the New Testament." It never ceases to amaze me how the hundreds of different pieces of evidence, manuscripts, books, archeological evidences, and facts that exist that expose the Pauline Problem have been kept from the general populace, and in their place, we find "one book" whose forgeries are so profound as to gloss over such a theological dispute to the degree than the normal reader can read these texts and Scriptures never noticing this great division and chasm separating Gnostic and anti-Gnostic, Pauline and Petrine Christianity.**

**So was the Gnostic Paul or the anti-Gnostic Paul the real Paul of the New Testament? Which of these Pauls are we to follow and believe when they teach on the Christ: Rome's anti-Gnostic Paul that follows the Petrines of Jerusalem and Rome with their literal and historical Jesus Christ and interpretation of the Scriptures, or the Gnostic Paul and the**

**early Gnostic Christians with their indwelling Christ along with their allegorical, mystical, and metaphysical interpretation of the Scriptures? Should we expect the Gnostic Paul with his Gnostic writings to be a a faithful follower of a supposed literal or historical Jesus of Nazareth as taught by the Jerusalem Church and the later Roman literalizers of Scripture? Is this why the St. Paul of the New Testament never writes of a supposed Human Jesus or ever mentions his supposed virgin birth or Earthly ministry? Or, should we expect the Gnostic Paul to oppose such a false and denounce several of his churches who were falsely misled by the false Jerusalem apostles which misunderstood the Scriptures and taught "another gospel" of a literal and historical Christ-Messiah that was limited to but one person by the Petrines of Jerusalem and later with Rome? What should the later Scriptural forgery and alteration of the Gnostic Scriptures by the Petrines, along with their later additions to the Gnostic Scriptures called interpolations, as well as their deletions of the Gnostic Scriptures in various places, teach us about who had the truth about the Christ, so much so, that out of desperation, the opposing camp, the Petrines of Jerusalem and later by Rome, had to resort to forging, adulterating, tampering, adding to and taking away from the Holy Scriptures in order to deceive the people as to what was, in their opinion and interpretation of Scripture, the truth about the Christ? Could God be pleased with such deception and destruction of His prior revelation to mankind which has stood basically unchanged for almost 10,000 years or longer? Was the real Paul in the New Testament a Gnostic believer who only taught the indwelling Christ in mankind, and in so doing, denounced the literal and historical Jesus taught by Peter, James, and John, and is this the reason he was never accepted by them as a true apostle of Christ? Will a serious and hard-nosed study of the New Testament as well as consultation of evidence outside the New Testament, help us determine the answers to the above question? Will the conflicts and contradictions involved in the presentation of St. Paul in the New Testament help us come to see that we are not dealing with one person or one voice in the New Testament, but in reality, we are dealing with two voices in the New Testament; one Gnostic and one anti-gnostic? Will examination of the Romanized Paul where we come to discover and isolate historical impossibilities, contradictions among the teachings of St. Paul, opposing dogmatic perspectives from the same man, antagonistic theologies from this same Paul, as well as opposing and contradictory gospels be convincing to the point to make a truth-seeker to seriously look at the earlier St. Paul, the Gnostic, as being the true Paul of the New Testament and any other who brings a different Christ from which St. Paul preached and taught in the beginning of his ministry in the Book of Galatians and I Corinthians is the false gospel and false Christ, even if it is the more familiar gospel today which teaches a literal or historical Jesus Christ which the Gnostic true Paul could and would never teach?**

**Bet Emet Ministries is devoting this website to providing such evidence in hopes that the normative Christian can learn from it and make necessary adjustments in both his religious belief system as well as his conduct. It is not my purpose to hurt anyone or their faith, nor is it my purpose to unfairly judge St. Paul, but we must come to discern which of the two different Pauls, the Gnostic Paul or the Petrine's anti-Gnostic Paul, is speaking in these texts we read and which is the true message and which is "another gospel" which were warned not to accept. Truth in these matters if of the greatest importance and we must let the evidence from the authentic Epistles of Paul speak for itself, and not the textual forgeries and interpolations that only lead us away from truth. If you have the courage and strength for such a study, then the truths in the following articles will show you the Romanized Paul is the false Paul! This false Paul, this Romanized Paul, preaching as he does a Christ come in the flesh, is the false Christ! St. Paul cries out yet today to us heed his warning in 2 Cor 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Notice, the Christ is "in you," out apart from you, not outside of you.**

**After you complete and study through this website, your life will never be the same. I will warn you before hand that you will experience every emotion possible as your study this material regarding who is the true St. Paul and who is not. You will experience grief, tears, heart brokenness, anger, indignation, etc., as you finally, possibly for the first time in your life, come to the see how many untruths have been passed off to you as supposed truths that you accepted in blind faith in your previous Christian experience. When one is finished with this website and the facts and evidences presented in it, I strongly urge the student and reader, in order to balance out what he has been shown here (the the St. Paul presented in most of the Pauline Epistles in the New Testament is a falsehood and an untruthful representation of the true historical Gnostic St. Paul), then I strongly encourage you to investigate the Gnostic Paul in-depth in order to obtain a deeper truth behind what the Gnostic Paul originally taught concerning the evolution of the "Gnostic Christ" in you. This knowledge can be found on our other Website revealing the Secret Mysteries as well as the First New Testament website.**

**But first things first. Let us look at this "Romanized Paul" which we have been taught our whole lives as Christians and followers of "the Christ" and let us see how Rome has destroyed and altered the earlier Spiritual truths that the real historical Gnostic Paul believed which can be found existing in mystical Judaism. We trace in this website how the St. Paul taught the earliest Christians of the "Christ within" him. Later, Rome will come and create a Romanized Paul who is made to teach "a Christ without" and apart from mankind. This is the other gospel of which we were warned by St. Paul to avoid at all costs. We will come to see how the ancient religious and Spiritual allegories were understood not only by these ancients who were given them by God and how this Spiritual Revelation was understood by the Gnostic Jews like the Essene Christians as well as the earliest Gnostic Gentiles in the earliest centuries of the emerging Church, long before Rome will come and "literalize" all of the Ancient Wisdom and give it a fictitious historical time line in the creation of the historical "Jesus Story." In so doing, we will see how the earliest New Testament expressing these allegorical Divine truths is butchered by Rome and destroyed and how we end up with the forgery we have today entitled the "New Testament." Truly, there is nothing new in it, because if correctly read and interpreted, it is nothing more than the restatement of the Ancient Wisdom and the indwelling Christ/Divine Mind in mankind which the Gnostic Paul taught. Never let it be said that archeology and hard study are not our friends, because when coupled together, the truth always shines forth. Now let us be ruthless in our search for truth as we examine the Paul of the New Testament, and in so doing, see if the Paul we have been given in the New Testament by Rome can hold up under intense scrutiny, or if he is an invention of Rome's political and religious desires. If so, then, by default, the other St. Paul is the real one and this one is the Gnostic St. Paul. Truth has finally been found after a 2,000 year absence.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH

### WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO STUDY THE PAUL PROBLEM WEBSITE

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**I apologize for the length of this opening article to this website, however it is necessary if you are to correctly understand what follows in the website as we reveal to you a counterfeit St. Paul which is the writer of six of the thirteen Pauline Epistles in the New Testament. Without this background information, a typical Christian reader will come to think as he reads this website that I don't know of what I speak. Let me assure you, thirty years of scholarly study on this Bible, every day five to 8 hours a day, has taught me things that few people alive know in today's world. It is time this knowledge once again becomes common knowledge, especially if you desire truth when you read the Bible, given that the Bible is full of purposefully forged, misquoted, interpolated and invented Scriptures, the intent of which is to deceive the reader into believing "another gospel" from the one first preached by St. Paul long before the six forged Epistles that carry St. Pauls names were forged or the four gospels ever saw the light of day in 180 C.E.. You won't have to read far into this website before you see the evidence vindicating what I have just said. Having said this, now we move on to the Paul Problem.**

**Before we begin this website and the critical examination of the New Testament Paul, or should I say Pauls, I desire to give the reader the necessary background that will facilitate his successful reading and navigation through this website upon the two Pauls and the problems surrounding rightly interpreting the Pauline writings in the New Testament, and I do mean, both of them. The presence of two different Pauls and two different conflicting gospels in the Pauline Epistles will become very plain and apparent as your reading advances. It more than likely will be news to most of our readers that there are two completely different Pauls who wrote Scripture in the New Testament. In other words, within the New Testament, we have the record of the historical Gnostic Paul who only wrote, according to most modern Bible scholars, only seven authentic Gnostic epistles. Opposing this historical Gnostic Paul, we have Rome's counterfeit anti-gnostic Paul who is credited with writing six of the anti-Gnostic Pauline Epistles in the New Testament. A close reading of the New Testament will disclose to the careful reader that the New Testament Gnostic Paul was the harshest opponent of Historical Christianity, and not the apostle of Historical Christianity was we might suppose from a cursory reading of the New Testament texts and Scriptures. Long before the emergence of Roman Christianity, however, serious students of the New Testament cannot help but notice that a serious rift in differences existed between St. Paul and the other founders of Christianity in Jerusalem; namely Cephas (Peter), James, and John. Modern Bible scholars have termed this collection of three pillars in the Jerusalem Church and their followers "Petrines." The historical Gnostic Paul, and his followers, the "Paulines," did not think much of these men personally and had nothing in common with these men, going so far at times to scoff at them being supposed pillars of the Church in Jerusalem as seen in the Book of Galatians 2:9. Needless to say, these three men, Peter, James, and John**

**never forgave Paul for his theological independence and opposition to their interpretation and understanding of "the Christ," otherwise called "the Messiah." If we only read the New Testament accounts, we never obtain the depth of this rift and theological split that separated the Jerusalem leadership and the historical Paul, given that efforts have been made to conceal such a split in the New Testament. Make no mistake about it, this rift will eventually cause two voices to be heard in the texts when reading the Pauline Epistles. A serious study of the Pauline Epistles introduces the truth-seeker to a confusing contradiction of two difference voices which pretend to be the historical Paul in the Pauline Epistles. These contradicting voices will, more often than not, confound and confuse the reader of the Pauline Epistles because they continually utter different and opposing religious and theological doctrines that remain forever irreconcilable and contradict each other. This incompatible and duplicity of religious doctrines, one mystical and metaphysical, the other literal and historical, make the Paul of the New Testament appear to be two-faced, double-dealing, and double-tonged. In opposition in the Pauline corpus of literature in the New Testament, are the tension and conflict between the Gnostic, or Spiritual Christ, and the historical Jesus Christ. One thing is for certain, after one comes to see this duality of contradictory instruction and teaching in the Pauline Epistles, both messages cannot be true to Paul. Only one of these voices belonged to the historical Paul. Which voice is it? Was the truth taught by the Gnostic Paul or the anti-Gnostic Paul in the Pauline Epistles?**

**If one was to undertake a serious study of the New Testament, he cannot help but emerge from such study aware that Paul and the other Apostles did not preach the same gospel, nor the same Christ. Not only did the historical Gnostic Paul not support Historical Christianity as taught by James and the Jerusalem Church which was founded upon a carnalized and materialized Christ of flesh, but the Gnostic Paul was for his whole life its constant and pestilent opponent. After Paul's death, his writings were tampered with, interpolated, and re-indoctrinated by his arch enemies, first those of the Jerusalem Church, and later by the proto-Roman forgers and falsifiers of the Pauline Epistles, who first began to lay the foundation for the soon coming religious dogmas and doctrines of Christ upon which the Papacy in Rome will be constructed. Through such manipulation and adulteration of the original Epistles of the Gnostic Paul the foundation of Rome's deceiving and deluding faith will be constructed. Over the next century or more, the Epistles of the Gnostic Paul will become so twisted and distorted, that they will become the main support for Historic Christianity. These tampered with Epistles of the Gnostic Paul become the very catalyst upon which Roman Christianity will achieve its evangelistic success among the ignorant masses. When alive, the Gnostic Paul had fought with all his might against the men who tried to spread the knowledge and faith of the Christ made flesh. The irony in all of this, is that for 1,800 years, the historical Paul, who was a Gnostic and life-long opponent of the literal and historical Christ Jesus, has been claimed by Historical Christianity not only as their apostle to the Gentiles, but the very founder of Christianity.**

**Let me begin by saying that a serious study of the conversion of Paul in the New Testament will reveal wonders to the enlightened mind. It is common knowledge when reading the book of Acts that Paul supposedly was a persecutor of the early Christians. In this second-hand account of Paul's conversion in the Book of Acts, this same Paul undergoes a rebirth of sorts through a vision of the risen of a personal Jesus Christ. The supposed historical nature of Jesus Christ is supposedly proven since Jesus is said to have appeared to Paul in person as recorded in the Book of Acts. Hence, the dogma of a prior historical Jesus is set forth by such a story. This, however, is not the only account of the conversion of Paul in the New Testament, for we have another by the personal hand of Paul himself. This second account, a personal account by Paul himself of this momentous event in his life, is given in Paul's first Epistle, the Book of Galatians 1:15-16: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, ..." Notice if you will, that it was by a revelation of the Christ <u>WITHIN HIM</u> that Paul's life changed, but not by an objective vision of a personal Jesus or a literal or historical Jesus as the Book of Acts tries to infer. It was not by a historical Jesus of Nazareth or an apparition of a historical Jesus outside of himself that Paul was changed, as he declares, "when it was the good pleasure of God to reveal his Son <u>IN ME</u>." No Jesus outside of himself, but only within himself, was the driving force and power that moved Paul into a completely new direction in his life. Paul's new life began with a Gnostic vision of the Christ of Gnosis, not an historical encounter with a historical Jesus Christ in some apparition apart from himself. Notice as well that Paul said he heard no voice external to**

**himself, no voice of a historical Jesus was heard. If we will be honest, if we compare the two accounts of Paul's conversion, the account in the Book of Acts has been manipulated and perverted from Paul's personal account in order to support the later Orthodox Roman Christian account in order to make them both dovetail with their dogma of a literal and historical Jesus Christ. What Paul did hear, however, when caught up in the Spirit, he tells us is unspeakable. Paul heard words which are not lawful for a man to repeat or utter. Most important, Paul makes no mention of Jesus of Nazareth; it is as if Jesus of Nazareth is unknown to him. In fact, the name and historical reference to Jesus of Nazareth never appears in any of Paul's Epistles, we only encounter Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, Jesus, or Christ.**

**If we read the Book of Acts concerning Paul's conversion, the date supposed for Paul's conversion is around the year 30 C.E. at the earliest. Paul states that after his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem for 3 years. Then after 14 more years Paul states that he went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas. This second visit was connected to a great famine in Jerusalem in 44 C.E. If we 3 years to 14 years we obtain 17 years. If we date the second visit to Jerusalem in 44 C.E., the date well known because of the greatness of this famine in Palestine, we have only to subtract these 17 years from 44 C.E. and we obtain the year 27 C.E. for the time of Paul's conversion to Christianity. What is wrong with this dating? In 27 C.E., Jesus of Nazareth, had he been a literal person, would have been yet crucified by all accounts and no appearance of an apparition of a prior literal and historical Jesus of Nazareth could have taken place. The account of Paul' conversion in the Book of Acts could not be a Spiritual manifestation of a supposed personal Jesus, who by all calculations, was not then dead. It has been said of the writers of the Book of Acts, that the writers of the Book of Acts falsify whenever convenient, and tell the truth only when they cannot help it. Looking at Paul's account of his conversion once more, Paul stated in the Book of Galatians 1: 16-17: "...immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me;..." Notice if you will that St. Paul, a Gnostic, did not seek to know anything about a personal Christ Jesus, or Jesus as the Messiah, being taught by the Jerusalem Church, nor a personal Jesus of Nazareth. Paul had no interest in the supposed historical life of Jesus, the historical miracles of Jesus, the historical crucifixion of Jesus, the historical resurrection of Jesus, or the historical ascension of Jesus. In fact, the Gnostic Paul had no interest in hearing anything about the human nature of this Divine Being from supposed living witnesses, who, if we recall from the account in the Book of Acts concerning Paul's conversion, supposedly appeared to Paul in person not many days ago. The appearance to Paul we are told was of such a magnitude that it changed the course of his life on the spot and transformed his very character instantly. Yet, impossible at it might appear, this Paul tells us personally in a letter written by his own hand, that he has no wish to travel 150 miles to verify the literal or historical Christ. When Paul does finally go to Jerusalem 3 years later, there was historical Jesus to be found, nor any records or artifacts of his existence to be found. Paul did not even bother to look, knowing full well that the only Christ is the indwelling Christ in mankind. Then, again 14 years later, Paul makes another trip and tell us that again he learned nothing whatsoever from those in Jerusalem who now taught only a historic Christianity. The pillars of the Jerusalem Church, imparted nothing to Paul. You would think that had the Christ been historical, then Paul would have been anxious to learn of the personal Jesus, who according to the Book of Acts, appeared to him on the Damascus road. You would think that Paul would have desired to be told of the intimate details of the life of this personal Christ, yet, Paul shows no desire to know anything about a supposed literal or historical Jesus of Nazareth. Contrariwise, it was Paul who had a Gospel of Gnosis to communicate to the pillars of the Jerusalem Church which he tells us in Galatians 1:12 that he received from no man: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." We are told that privately the pillars of the Jerusalem Church gave him the hand of fellowship and offered to acknowledge him if he kept out of their way with his "other gospel" and go to the Gentiles who Jews in the first century detested. This was a compromise at best. Paul realized what few Christians to today when reading their Bible, these Petrines were preaching "another gospel" and "another Jesus" of which Paul had previously warned us about:**

- **2 Cor 11:4 "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."**

- **Gal 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."**

**In teaching a literal and historical Jesus Christ the Jerusalem Church was teaching another gospel, in reality, a perversion and gross misunderstanding of the mystical and metaphysical Scriptures whose origins go all the way back to Ancient Egypt. Today's dogmas and doctrines of a literalized and historicized Christianity is this same "other gospel" we are warned to avoid. This "other gospel" is the gospel of the literalizers of ancient mystical mythology where a metaphysical gospel as old as the Sphinx is mistakenly misunderstood and taught as a gospel of flesh to save mankind from a fall that never happened, the remedy of which is the atoning sacrifice of this Christ of flesh. There is many problems with this, first of all, such an atoning sacrifice is a total perversion and misunderstanding of how the sacrificial system in Judaism actually operated and worked. Besides that, is the total absence of a literal and historical Jesus Christ in the history of mankind. It was this "other Gospel" that the true Gnostic Paul spent his life denouncing and waged a continual warfare against. Hard to believe, but true, when the Scriptures in the New Testament are read and interpreted correctly, and when the interpolations in its texts are removed, and when compared to extra-biblical unforged history, the facts are sobering: We have listened our whole lives to another Jesus, another Spirit, and another gospel that was originally misunderstood, misinterpreted, and erroneously taught by the pillars of the Jerusalem Church in the first century. Paul calls these Jerusalem pillars in his 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians "...false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." To those who received and accepted this "other gospel" from the Petrines the Gnostic Paul had strong words: in the Book of Galatians 3:1, 3: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth,...Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" The Gnostic Paul knew that there is no perfection of the Soul to be attained in a gospel of Christ made flesh, the gospel taught by the Jerusalem Chruch and by those who followed Paul's footsteps in his journeys, trying to undo, from town to ton, the gospel he taught, with their false literalized and historicized gospel. Paul knew another thing or two about the Jerusalem Church, that even then, in the first century, these men were not above forging Epistles in Paul's name in order to deceive his followers, a practice that will gain full steam with the emergence of Orthodox Roman Christianity. In spite of such odds, the Gnostic Paul endeavored to fight on against the forgers of the fleshly faith taught in Jerusalem, because in his mind, and after the revelation of God's Christ within him, there was no turning back. Forever the gospel of the Gnostic and Spiritual Christ will be at odds with the Gospel of the Christ made flesh. The Gnostic Paul would, for the rest of his life follow the truth of "the Christ," and in so doing, would say in Galatians 1:11-12: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Notice if you will, in one of Paul's authentic Gnostic letters, he said that his gospel was not taught him by man, or the Jerusalem Church, but through internal revelation "of" Jesus Christ. Who is "the Christ" or "Christ Jesus" anyway. Said differently, in the Gospel of Mark 8:27 we encounter the huge question: "...he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?" Who is "this Christ"? The Gnostic Paul received his answer by internal intuitive revelation; consequently, he never taught a gospel derived from history, nor the gospel taught by the pillars of the Jerusalem Church, nor by other men or books. The Gnostic Paul, having received the indwelling truth of the Christ within him, never could accept nor teach a literal and historical, or external Christ apart from mankind. St. Paul, the Gnostic, taught his gospel from direct personal revelation of the Christ within. Hence, the Gnostic's Christ is not the Jesus of Nazareth whom the Gnostic Christ not the Gnostic Marcion, who gave mankind the first New Testament, never mentions. Not only during the life of the Gnostic Paul, but afterwards, Paul's writings will be consistently altered, added to, subtracted from, interpolated and have invented Scriptures added to them, thereby assuring victory of not only the carnalizers of Jerusalem but those of Rome who followed in their footsteps as the later forgers and interpolators of Paul's authentic Epistles. Both Jerusalem and Rome had one thing in common; they have never met the indwelling Christ within them. Had they done so, then like the Gnostic Paul, no longer could they**

**continue to teach a false carnalized, materialized, literalized, and historicized Christ when there never was one, only a gross misinterpretation of the Ancient Wisdom and the ancient Scriptures of Ancient Egypt which always taught the indwelling Krst/Christ in mankind correctly. The Gnostic Paul, in his gospel, taught this same truth regarding the Krst/Christ, for there is no other truth about the Christ than can be taught.**

**By default, then, the appearance of the Christ to Paul on the road to Damacus was a Gnostic mystical experience of the resurrected Christ and Divine Mind in Paul, an event that occurred during the time given for the supposed Earthly life of Jesus. As well, had their been a historical Jesus Christ in the year 27 C.E., Paul would have had at least 6 years to make his acquaintance, given that most modern scholars date the supposed crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth to 33 C.E. Paul, again, never mentions a Jesus of Nazareth in any of his writings, before 27 C.E., or afterwards, even up to the end of his life. It is, once again, as if Jesus of Nazareth never lived to Paul. He didn't; only the travesty of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the Scriptures that taught the indwelling Christ in mankind as seen in the Book of Colossians 1:27-29: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."**

**Most interesting, in the Gospel of Marcion, lacking as well is any reference to Jesus of Nazareth. It is a common ploy of by some early Church Fathers to insinuate that Marcion purposefully removed the name of Jesus of Nazareth from his gospel, but this is hardly truthful, given that the name Jesus of Nazareth is likewise lacking from the Epistles of Paul. We have to wait 130 years after Paul's Epistles before we find the name Jesus of Nazareth in any gospel, being that it does not become public until Irenaeus brings forth the 4 Gospels around 180 C.E. Hence, Paul is in agreement with Marcion, the Gnostic rejector of the historical Jesus of Nazareth, and of historic Christianity. Moreover, Paul was the only apostle of the true Christ who was recognized by Marcion. This Marcion will leave the religious sect to whom he once belonged over the human nature of the Christ, and after his absence, it will be this sect which becomes in time the Church of historic Christianity in Rome, the Roman Catholic Church. Owing to the fact that Marcion's New Testament, the first Gnostic New Testament, did not contain the textual forgeries and interpolations common to falsifiers and forgers of Scripture, otherwise known as the carnalizers, literalizers, and historicizers of Scripture, it was only natural for men like Irenaeus to falsely complain and accuse Marcion of dismembering the Epistles of Paul and held him responsible for supposedly removing those passages from the Pauline Epistles which has been interpolated by Roman Orthodoxy in order to prove their dogma of a literal and historical Christ. This same Marcion recognized the historical Paul as his fellow-Gnostic, while at the same time, rejected the literalizations and spurious doctrines which had been surreptitiously interpolated by the founders and forgers of Historic Christianity in Rome. To Marcion, only Paul, of all Christian teachers, knew the truth about the Christ, and to him was the Mystery of Christ manifested by revelation within himself, not apart from himself. Hence, the historical Paul was the Gnostic opponent of Historic Christianity.**

**This latter counterfeit anti-Gnostic Paul never historically lived and is Rome's, the Church Fathers, and their monk's deceptive attempt to negate all that the Gnostic Christian Paul said concerning the indwelling Christ. The indwelling Christ in mankind is the only Christ taught by the historical Gnostic Paul in the seven authentic Epistles that he wrote. The only real historical Paul which we know of in our Information Age is the one who was a Gnostic Christian in the first century, a man who was filled with the Spirit of God and believed only in the mystical and metaphysical Christ indwelling the whole of mankind which becomes known by a Spiritual and metaphysical interpretation of the Ancient Scriptures. The Gnostic Paul's Christ was the indwelling incarnation of God in mankind, known and called by the Ancients long before this Gnostic Paul as the "Krst/Christ." All of human life was devoted to awakening the Presence and Power of this Krst/Christ lying latent within mankind: "Awake thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead" is the cry of the true St. Paul, a Gnostic believer. The other forged literature and Scripture in the New Testament falsely ascribed to the anti-gnostic Paul as its presumed author, is Rome's clumsy attempt to present to the ignorant masses of that day, anti-Gnostic and**

**anti-metaphysical teachings in the hope of negating and doing away with the Gnostic teachings of the real St. Paul. Such Scriptural forgery was Rome's attempt to steal the authority of St. Paul and place it behind their creation of a literal and historical Jesus as the Christ of early Roman Christianity from the 2nd century and onward. Let us not forget that the earliest gospel was Paul's gospel, a Gnostic gospel. Paul calls it "my Gospel" in the texts of the New Testament. This same Gnostic Paul warns the brethren to not be led astray and accept a later false gospel and a false Christ which would try to undermine the Gnostic teachings of St. Paul or the Gnostic Christ as well. The Gnostic Paul will state in 2 Cor 11:4: "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel..." The true Gnostic Paul was forced to say this early in his ministry because in his day, there already existed those who completely misunderstood the mystical and metaphysical nature of the "Christ Story" or the "Jesus Story" and were mistakenly teaching this "mystery hidden before the foundation of the world" as a presumed literal historical Christ which was limited to but one person instead of applying the indwelling Christ to the whole of the human race. Again, the Gnostic Paul would state in his very first book, the Book of Galatians 1: 6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." These are strong words by Paul for those who would fraudulently counterfeit the truths of God and His indwelling presence in mankind for selfish and personal ends. Let it be said that the gospel that the Gnostic Paul taught never was about a supposed literal or historical Jesus; the Gnostic Paul's Christ was not a human being; he was the incarnated evolving Divine Mind in each of God's children struggling to be raised from the dead in this Earthly life. Let it be said as well that I am hard on the anti-Gnostic Paul, the counterfeit Paul, since Paul, a Gnostic believer, has been fraudulently presented to us on the pages of this New Testament as a believer in the literal and physical Jesus of Nazareth which never lived a historical existence as normal men and women! This false Paul, the anti-Gnostic Paul, has been presented to the readers of the Bible instead of the true Gnostic Paul by the false literalizers and carnalizers of Scripture, the Roman Catholic Church and her equally deceived daughter, the Protestant Church. This deception has been on going now almost 2,000 years. In today's Information Age, the knowledge has come forth revealing this deception and it is way past time that the truth in this matter be restored and told to every person on Earth who has an interest in the truth about the Bible.**

**The continual growth of Gnostic Christian followings throughout the second century troubled the orthodox Roman Christians so much that something had to be done to stop the popularity of Gnostic Christianity and its rapid and successful growth among the masses. In order to stop its successful growth, Irenaeus wrote a vast five-volume book entitled Against Heresies. The significance of St. Paul's influence among the Gnostic Christians and they upon the masses threatened the very existence of emerging Roman Christianity to the point that Irenaeus, a Christian Bishop and early Church Father and apologist, whose writings were formative in the early development of Christian theology, decided that nothing short of lying and deception had to be resorted to in order to proclaim among the ignorant masses that St. Paul was never a Gnostic and never taught Gnostic doctrines and dogmas. In so doing, Irenaeus used what evidence he could find among the Pastoral epistles and the Gnostic Gospel of John, as well as manufacturing his own, in order to promote the view of St. Paul as being anti-gnostic, when the reverse was actually the case. Despite Irenaeus' claim that St. Paul was not a Gnostic, Valentinus, the most successful early Christian gnostic theologian and leader of a large faction of Gnostic Christians, claimed that Paul had initiated his very own teacher Theudas into the deeper Mysteries of Christianity, which revealed a secret Gnostic doctrine of God to those who had merited it owing to their deeper Spiritual maturity. Even Clement of Alexandria will admit this same fact that only one person separated Valentinus and his writings and St. Paul. The followers of the Gnostic Christian Valentinus will systematically decode the Epistles, attempting to extract all Gnostic references from its texts. They will do such a thing because they maintained, and rightfully so, that most Roman Catholic Priests and their Christian flocks made the mistake of reading the Epistles literally rather than allegorically, mystically, and metaphysically. Valentinus understood that the conflict in the Book of Romans supposedly between Jews on the one hand and Gentiles on**

**the other, was in reality a coded reference to the differences between Psychics who were people who are Spiritually evolving, but at the same time, were only partly Spiritual, having not achieved a total separation from their animal nature and its carnality and the works of the flesh. Then there were the Pneumatics who were totally Spiritual people. The followers of Valentinus argued that such codes in the Scriptures were intrinsic in Gnosticism, being that this secrecy of the Spirit realm was important to ensuring proper progression to true inner understanding of the Bible's Sacred Texts and Scriptures. In 1 Corinthians 3:2 we find that the Gnostic St. Paul goes on to state that "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" In other words, these people were still fleshly, or Hylic, or had not passed even the first level of understanding of the Spirit. They were yet babies in Christ, not far along the path of their evolution into the Spiritual beings that they truly are, (gods). As well, St. Paul previously stated in 1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned..." Spiritual discernment always begins at the level of a child or baby, and progresses in the normal course of growth and evolution to higher levels of Spiritual awareness on its way to the "stature of the fulness of Christ" as mentioned in the Book of Ephesians 4:13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:" This "stature of the fullness of Christ" is only realized when a person comes to the full realization of the following two Scriptures in the Bible; one an Old Testament verse and one a New Testament verse:**

- **Ps 82:6 6 "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High."**
- **John 10:34 "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?"**

**These above two Scriptures are the heart and Soul of the Ancient Wisdom Religions as well as the Sacred Christian Scriptures. Much of this Ancient Wisdom and its Scriptures comes later to be included in our Bible. Roman Christianity, early in the 2nd century, will emerge, however, historicizing and literalizing this Ancient Wisdom and its ancient mythologies and the ancient religious texts of Ancient Egypt. In so doing, Rome will ensure to the best of its ability that mankind will not discover the indwelling divinity within itself, while at the same time accepting the identity of one solitary person as the Christ who is the fruit of their inventive minds, Jesus of Nazareth. Through the agency of textual corruption and purposeful mistranslation and Scriptural invention, Roman Christianity will only further their religious deception of the masses and cultivate by such a deception a dependence of the masses upon the Roman Church for they will create the dogmas that outside of the Roman Church there is no salvation; only the fires and torment of Hell await such people. To top it all off, Rome will resort to destroying the evidence of their religious opposition, the Gnostic Christians and their texts, as well as burning and razing to the ground the world's libraries which housed these Sacred writings of the Gnostics which were the records of mankind's physical and Spiritual existence upon this planet Earth from his very creation and beginning.**

**At the heart of Rome's radical reinterpretation of the Ancient Wisdom and its Scriptures is the historicization of the indwelling and evolving God/Divine Mind/Christ in mankind whereby what was once mystical and metaphysical for thousands and thousands of years, as told in allegories and myths in the Ancient Religions and Mysteries of the nations of the world, becomes with the pens of Roman scribes and monks, carnalized and Judaized into a supposed solitary historical person whom we recognize today as the Jesus of Nazareth. Make no mistake about it, Gnosticism long predates the rise of Roman Christianity and the Gnostic Christ had been taught for thousands and thousands of years prior to Rome's new radical reinterpretation of "the Christ." Roman writers will try to make it appear as if Gnosticism arose in the first century of the Christian era and that Gnosticism was a later corruption of the former Roman Christianity. Hardly ever has a bigger lie ever been told. Gnosticism, from the Greek word "gnosis," meaning knowledge, in particularly knowledge of the Spiritual realm beyond man's five senses of discernment. These earliest Christian Gnostics were the Jewish legacy of the former Essenes as they were considered the "keepers of the gnosis" or "Gnostics." Other well known Gnostics were Greek philosophers like Pythagoras and Plato, both of whom traveled and studied under the Ancient**

**Egyptians. It is not a coincidence that these earliest Gnostics had no main group and were eclectic, the whole of them all recognized that they were one, whether they were Syrian Gnostics, Samaritian Gnostics, Jewish Gnostics, Christian Gnostics, or Pagan Gnostics. Interestingly, there was a simple reason why these Gnostics were unified as if one even though dispersed; they recognized that there is only one Spiritual truth when viewed esoterically, mystically, and metaphysically. When viewed together, as Gnostics, they held sacred prior Spiritual truths gathered together from the teachings of Plato, Pythagoras, Philo, Avestas, Kabbalah, the mysteries of Samothrace, Eleusis, Orphism, Mithraism, Buddhism, Osirianism, etc. Overall for our purposes, these Gnostic expressions congealed in Palestine in the first century and can appropriately be called proto-Christianity. It should not be thought strange that the earliest Christians were proud to be Gnostics. For example, the very famous Church Father, Clement of Alexandria, considered himself orthodox but at the same time considered himself a Gnostic initiate. A little known fact is that Irenaeus and Augustine were both known to be Gnostics in the earlier parts of their lives. Interestingly, only after the Council of Nicea where Constantine took control of Christianity did Augustine renounce his Christian Gnosticism after being promised a prominent position in the newly formed Catholic or Universal Church by Constantine. No longer was Augustine a Christian Gnostic; overnight he became a staunch believer in whatever Constantine said was to be "believed." To Augustine's credit, a few weeks prior to his death, he recanted the errors of his Catholic faith and make this startling announcement which is quoted by Alvin Kuhn in his Shadow Of The Third Century, taken from Augustine's Retractt. I, xiii: "That which is known as the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist; from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion, which already existed began to be called Christianity." Finally, Augustine recounts the truth he once cherished before his conversion to the religion of Constantine following the Nicean Council.**

**Many early Christian concepts were Gnostic such as the disdain for flesh and "matter" being that the world in which men live was a mixture of good and evil, something difficult to accept when God is thought to be perfect. Hence, it was reasoned by the Gnostics that God had commissioned a lesser god in the hierarchy of Heaven to be responsible for the creation of a world possessing duality within it, both good and evil. According to Gnosticism, this Creation was not the work of the Unknown or Unknowable Perfect God of the Cosmos. The task of Creation of an imperfect world was believed to be delegated to these lesser gods and goddesses who were but emanations of the Supreme God. These subordinate gods and goddesses are responsible for not only creating the world, but governing the world and all other worlds. These subordinate gods and goddesses were called Aeons. Among these Aeons were the Logos (The Word), Sophia (Wisdom), Nous (Divine Mind), Phronesis (Judgment), and Dynamis (Power). All of these subordinate gods and goddesses were in their own right subordinate Spirits, or as often called, attributes of the Supreme God but having, if need be, separate existences. Christians came to call these Spirits, gods, goddesses, as well as Angels. Ancient Egypt called them Neteru, otherwise known as Living, Intelligent, Conscious, Cosmic Energies, the whole of which make up the very body of God.**

**The Gnostic Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:2-4 speaks of a veiled Gospel and mystery as well as this Lesser god who created the world in which men live: "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." The Gnostic Paul called this Lesser god the "god of this world." Gnostics came to believe that this particular subordinate and lesser god responsible for the Creation of the Earth had messed up, and was believed to be evil for it had created the world full of both good and evil; a task surely the Absolute and Supreme God, had He made the world, would have done better. Since evil exists in the world, and in the lives and hearts of men, this god had to be less of a god than the Great God who was all perfect. For our purposes in studying the Scriptures to determine the true Gnostic Paul from the false anti-gnostic Paul, this evil in the world was associated by this Gnostic Paul with the tampering, altering, and corruption of Sacred Scripture. This deceitful handling of the Word of God was recognized as occurring even in the first century as seen with the altering and forging of St. Paul's gospel and Epistles, as well as the**

**outright invention of whole other books with an anti-gnostic agenda to which Paul's name was affixed. We are very fortunate today for we have in our possession a number of letters that survived from Paul's own hand. They provide us with a bedrock of historical information about the Gnostic Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Take a second to let it sink in that the apostle sent to the Gentiles was taking Gnosticism and the indwelling and evolving Christ and Divine Mind into all the world, not a literalized or historicized Christ to the world who supposedly died for the sins of the world as would be taught much later by Rome. There are thirteen letters within the New Testament that claim to be written by Paul, among with a handful of letters outside the New Testament, including a third letter to the Corinthians, several letters to the Roman philosopher Seneca and several from him to Paul, and a letter to the Christians in the town of Laodicea. Modern scholars tell us today that a number of the writings that claim to be written by St. Paul were not actually written by him but are pseudepigraphical, which is a long word and a covert way of saying forgeries. This certainly is true for all the writings outside of the New Testament as well as some within the New Testament. This is not to mention the many Scriptural alterations of the true Epistles of St. Paul in the New Testament that have been altered in various places throughout the texts as well. All of the supposed writings between Paul and Seneca, dated to three centuries after the deaths of both Paul and Seneca, are of course deemed forgeries today as well as 3rd Corinthians and the Epistle to Laodicea. Scholars tell us that they are fully aware that various religious groups in the first century were forging letters in Paul's name, for example 3rd Corinthians which attacks the Gnosticism and Docetic Christology of St. Paul. Even during the life of the Gnostic Paul his Epistles were being forged. For example, in 2 Thessalonians, a letter claimed to be written by Paul, the author warns his readers against a letter circulating in his name that he himself did not actually write (2 Thessalonians 2:2). Most modern day scholars tell us that the Gnostic Paul did not write 2 Thessalonians. This in itself makes for a strong argument that there were Pauline forgeries in the first century that were floating around. Either 2 Thessalonians is from Paul's own hand and he knows of a forgery that is floating around in his name, or 2 Thessalonians is not from Paul's own hand and is itself a forgery. Either way, there are forgeries circulating in Paul's name in Paul's day and time. One thing is for certain, modern scholars of the Bible have far more resources at their disposal for uncovering ancient forgeries today than the ancient people did. Today, we are beneficiaries of sophisticated methods of literary analysis, indexes of vocabulary and grammatical stylistic preferences, data retrieval systems, etc., all of which go to help determining with greater accuracy and precision what books and writing were written by whom and which were not. This sure is better than deciding which books were written by who and when as those who chose which books were to be included into the New Testament centuries after the books of the New Testament were actually written. Those who made these decisions were not only centuries removed from these books when originally written, but were not academic scholars or literary sleuths. Living centuries after the books were written, they often had no means of gauging accurately whether a book's alleged author was its real author or not. When all is said and done today, almost all scholars are convinced that of the thirteen letters attributed to St. Paul in the New Testament, only seven are indisputably Gnostic in tone and are the Gnostic Paul's: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, I Thessalonians, and Philemon. The other six letters presumed to be of Pauline authorship, are shown by scholarly analysis, to differ often in significant ways, for example their anti-gnostic tone, from these seven undisputed Gnostic letters:**

- **Vocabulary and writing styles differ in comparisons between the undisputed seven letters of the Gnostic Paul and the other six letters. Every one has a distinctive writing style as when they write and it is possible today to compare these different writings to determine stylistic differences to see if a second book employs the style of a former book.**
- **The theological points of view represented by some of the disputed six letters appear to contradict the theology expressed in the seven undisputed Gnostic letters of the Gnostic Paul.**
- **The historical situation that lies behind the writing of the seven authentic Pauline Epistles is different from the later historical situation that arose long after Paul's death.**

**Hence, these other letters such as Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus, appear to have been written by later Christians who were taking Paul's name in order to propagate their own views of the**

**views of their own sects. Normally, these six letters contain anti-Gnostic and anti-docetic Christologies and try to promote a literal and historical Jesus Christ in Paul's name; a complete reverse in theology from the earlier Gnostic Paul who only taught in seven authentic Epistles "the Christ" as "the mystery of God" which is "within you." Paul's special stewardship of this mystery involved the disclosure of the "indwelling Christ in you" to the Gentiles. This Gnostic Paul consistently assures his hearers that "Christ is in you as your hope of glory." The phrase "in you" means "within you" as individuals. The indwelling Christ and indwelling Spirit are interchangeable for St. Paul. We find that this Gnostic Paul is expressing that in the here and now, as members of Christ's body, they have Christ's risen life and power within themselves. In fact, having awakened to the indwelling Christ, they can now be confident that they will share in the fullness of glory yet to be displayed when that day comes when they will be revealed as the "sons and daughters of God" as stated in Romans 8:19. This is a far cry from a literal or historical Jesus Christ, whose divinity separates him from the whole of humanity as Rome would have us believe and from a mankind who is nothing more than "sinners saved by grace."**

**Besides outright forgery of anti-gnostic letters to which Paul's name was affixed, often the undisputed Pauline letters reveal many places where later Roman anti-gnostic scribes when they copied these letters for centuries inserted materials into them that was anti-Gnostic in tone that was not originally there. This interpolated material sticks out like a sore thumb to those who previously have come to see that the authentic St. Paul and his seven authentic Epistles were both Gnostic to their core. These textual corruptions and interpolations cannot be used to establish what the real Paul himself said, believed, or thought. It does, however, reveal to us what the later Christians of the later centuries and Orthodox Roman Christianity wanted its reader and hearers to think Paul both advocated and believed, when the facts, if seen, reveal otherwise. The facts were not to be seen if Rome could help it. Thus, we see, a constant theological warfare of sorts was going on between the earliest Gnostic Christians and the later Orthodox literalizers of the Ancient Gnostic Wisdom in an attempt to win the minds and hearts of the masses, and in so doing, Rome's desire was to unify the Empire around their new Sungod Jesus Christ for the soon emerging Age of Pisces which was soon approaching. It was time for the new Sungod to appear for the new Astrological Age as the Sun begins its new course through the constellation of Pisces. With every new Age, there was always a new manifestation of God's Christ and Avatar (Savior). Since Roman religion has been centered in Sun worship, it was only natural that Rome would create a new Avatar and Sungod to inaugurate the coming new Age of Pieces. Hence, the Roman "Jesus Story" was created just in time for the Age of Pisces which began in 215 C.E.**

**So as we have seen St. Paul takes the time to warn in his own Epistles that even in his day there were some who were altering his Epistles and would continue to do so long after his death on order to negate his Gnostic Spiritual interpretation of his gospel and his Christ. Since St. Paul's Gnostic message was being forged and corrupted in his own lifetime, then we should be fully aware and expect that somewhere under the attribution of Pauline authorship we will come to find one or more of his own authentic Epistles containing inserted references to a literal and historical Jesus or other separate Epistles that carry Paul's name where anti-gnostic religious beliefs and tenets have been covertly inserted. In the earlier Pauline Epistles Paul speaks of Christ as a Spiritual Being who has always existed with God before the foundation of the Universe. This of course, is not a human being or a literal and historical Messiah, or a literal or historical Christ, given that the words Messiah and Christ are the same, to say the least. This Christ of whom St. Paul speaks was described by him in the Book of Galatians 2:20 as being not a literal or historical person but amazingly being or dwelling "in him": "...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:..." This again is not a human being! Sadly, this Christ, the indwelling Christ, is not what we always read in certain other Pauline Epistles where it has been made to look at the hands of textual forgers and corrupters as if Paul was the writer and espoused the same literal and historical Christ as does Orthodox Roman Christianity. The real St. Paul never did believed in a literal and historical Jesus Christ and never would, having seen and experienced Spiritually the "real Christ" in his life on the road to Damascus as seen in Acts 9: 1-8: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.**

**And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus." No matter what comes your way in this Earthly life, St. Paul fully realized the eternal truth spoken of in Hebrews 6: 4-5, that it "...is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,.." to ever deny and turn back against something that is more real than this illusion of Earthly life. Hence, there was no change of heart or theology in the life of the Gnostic Paul, even up to his last breath, being fully cognizant that he is an eternal being, one with the indwelling Christ and Divine Mind/Consciousness within his aging animal body which was destined to demise.**

**Gerald Massey, on pages 25 and 26 of his Gnostic And Historic Christianity, stated that Paul opposed John and Peter in the New Testament because God had sent them the spirit of error, that they should believe a lie, because they had previously rejected the truth of the indwelling Christ in mankind according to his Gospel, choosing rather to put their hopes in a literal and physical deliverer whom they believed might be the prophesied coming Messiah. The Gnostic Paul, often called the "Apostle of the Gnostics," never taught or acknowledged the supposed literal or historical Christ Jesus or the coming of a physical Messiah as mankind's Savior or answer. Once again Gerald Massey stated concerning the Gnostic Paul on pages 193-197 in his The Historical Jesus And The Mythical Christ: "Paul opposed the setting up of a Christ carnalized, and fought the Sarkolatoers (carnalizers) tooth and nail...If the writings of Paul were retouched by the carnalizers, that will account for the two voices heard at times in his Epistles and the apparent duplicity of his doctrine...Paul passes away and his writing remained with the enemy, to be withheld, tampered with, reindoctrinated, and turned to account by his old opponents who preached the gospel of Christ carnalized." Modern Bible scholarship has shown us that this was exactly what was done. At first, when reading these passages and quotes on the theological differences between Gnostics and Roman Christianity, let alone modern scholar's books, the typical Christian will want to discount them outright; for after all, this is not what his parents or his Pastor at his Baptist, Methodist, or the Priest at the Catholic Church has taught him. However, if we take a second and reflect on how the Gnostic St. Paul understood "the Christ," we might want to reflect upon the whole matter a little more cautiously. For example, the Gnostic Christ of Paul is mentioned in the Book of Galatians, chapter 3:27-28: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." It is rather hard to put upon yourself a complete other human being weighing, most likely, one hundred and sixty pounds or more. Hence, something other than a literal and historical human being is meant by the Gnostic St. Paul in these verses. Gerald Massey, once again on page 21 of his Gnostic And Historic Christianity explains the Ancient Egyptian origins of St. Paul's religious beliefs regarding the Krst/Christ when he stated; "The Christ of the Gnostics was a mystical type continued from mythology to portray a spiritual reality of the interior life. Hence, the Christ in this human phase could be female as well as male; for such to become historical, or be made so, except by ignorantly mistaking a mythical impersonation for a Hermaphrodite in Person." This explains why in Gnostic writings we find the allegorical representation of the "Christ" in both male and female forms: Jesus, the male, Sophia, the female wisdom spoken of in the Book of Proverbs. Thus we see, the Gnostic's focus on attaining gnosis from the kingdom of God within us is the same concept that is in our Christian Bible in the Gospel of Luke which is sadly ignored today in favor of Biblical ignorance which instead stresses "blind faith" in untruths. Make no mistake about it; the Kingdom of God exists only in you; not apart from yourself or outside of yourself as Luke 17:21 reminds us: "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." So, we are told not to say that the Kingdom of God is here or there, or over there, or around the block or coming soon. Neither are we to say that Christ is over here, was other there, lived a long time ago, and will come again, when the truth of the matter is that "the Christ" has**

**never left you throughout your entire life since your first breath when God breathed and incarnated into you the whole Spiritual being of His Christ and Divine Mind.**

**It is an undeniable fact that Gnosticism existed long prior to the rise of Roman Christian orthodoxy and only later, in the second century, was Gnosticism changed by force and deception into Orthodox Christianity around 220 C.E., and by the end of the fourth century Gnosticism was overcomed and crushed by Orthodox Christianity. As time went on, the differences in interpretation of the ancient Scriptures widened between the emerging Orthodox Roman Christianity and the already existing Gnostic Christianity. This separation between Gnostic Christianity and Orthodox Roman Christianity continued to increase the more that Orthodox Christianity continued to rewrite the ancient Gnostic Scriptures to bolster their particular anti-Gnostic and anti-metaphysical interpretation of the Scriptures. The Gnostic Christians responded by words to Rome's textual deceptions and labeled the Orthodox Roman Christianity who forged and altered the Gnostic Scriptures "blasphemers" because they did not know who Christ is or that He lived and dwelled within them. Elaine Pagels, author of The Gnostic Gospels, informs us that the Gnostics denounced the Orthodox Christians for their lack of Spirituality and considered them little better than "dumb animals" who attended the "imitation church." To the Gnostic Christians, the Orthodox Christians were full of "blind arrogance" and often, when not understanding the mystery of the Scripture, yet continued to speak of things which they did not understand, thus leading the whole congregation astray from the hidden and veiled truth of the Scriptures. The mistake of the Orthodox Christians was simple, they read the mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical Scriptures which, we are told in I Corinthians 2:14 are to be "Spiritually discerned," on a 3rd grade level, reading them continually literally or historically. Beginning with the Book of Genesis, Roman Christian exegesis begin reading their Bibles missing the deeper meaning of the Biblical texts. Instead of a Spiritual allegory, Rome read the Book of Genesis as well as all Scripture in the Bible basically as a literal and historical book, their eyes and hearts blinded to the Spiritual truth for the Soul of man in these verses. Needless to say, Gnostic Christianity and Orthodox Christianity both revered the same Scriptures that they held in common and each group claimed the Scriptures as their authority, however, the Gnostic Christians read the same Scriptures as Rome did radically different from the Orthodox Christians, and vice versa. Later, when Rome resorts to textual forgery, we now can explain why when reading the Pauline Epistles in the New Testament that it is tantamount to reading a schizophrenic account as contradiction after contradiction comes up in the texts of the Bible where this Paul, for example, cannot say the same thing the same way twice. Why not?**

**As mentioned above, modern scholars have shown us that the Gnostic Paul's writings and Epistles have been worked over by the anti-Gnostics of Roman Christianity. While the Gnostic Paul read the Scriptures in search for a deeper Gnosis, or a deeper Spiritual illumination or knowledge of the Scriptures, Roman Christians read the Scriptures as if history with a practical lesson in moral behavior as its goal. Gnostics poked fun often at the Roman Christians who read texts literally and historically, even when doing so made their meanings absolutely absurd if not loony. Such absurdities meant surely that the verses required other than a literal or historical reading and interpretation if they were to make sense; it would have been better if the verse or verses had not been read literally or historically, but rather as a Spiritual allegory. The Gnostic Christians like St. Paul took each line of the Scriptures as an enigma, a riddle, if you will, that pointed to a deeper meaning than a literal reading of the text could ever provide. What Rome continually rejected, or failed to perceive, is the truth of Scripture that behind and beneath each letter, and each word, man's divine being is hidden deeply within the texts of the Bible as well as within his human nature. Although often unperceived, the Spiritual potential that lies sleeping and latent within the human Soul, awaits awakening whether the Bible's verses are interpreted correctly or understood when read. Gerald Massey on page 97 of Gerald Massey's Lectures stated in his chapter entitled *Gnostic And Historic Christianity* that "Historic Christianity originated with turning the Gnostic and Esoteric teachings inside out and externalizing the mythical allegory in a personal human history." For the most part, Christianity has never recovered from this fatal error, however, in our day and time, this most wonderful Information Age, the light of truth begins to shine once again upon the minds and hearts of mankind.**

**Since most of the Gnostics were strongly "anti-material," and since evil is connected to imperfect "matter," the**

**Gnostics were strongly against any who tried to literalize and historicize the Scriptures let alone the Christ. When Rome emerged with a literal and historical Christ, which had never been done before from reading the Ancient Wisdom and the Ancient Scriptures in the history of mankind, the Gnostic Christians began to insist that the Christian savior had never come in the flesh. In fact, "the Christ" could never come "in the flesh" nor could "the Christ" ever taken human form and have a fleshy body as does mankind. Those that taught such blasphemous dogmas that literalized and historicized the mystical and metaphysical Christ, like Roman Christianity, were the real "heretics." Hence, the Gnostic Christians, as had all those who ever read the Ancient Scriptures, many of which later come to be incorporated into the Christian Bible, never conceived that anyone could interpret the Sacred Scriptures so backwards and asinine as to come away from them having read them and mistaken mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical texts in such a way as to believe in the historicity of Christ as a human being when in fact "the Christ" had always, since the beginning of time, been a Spiritual Being. To combat the Christian Gnostics, the literalizers of Scripture, the Roman Christians, had to resort to forging not only Pauline Epistles, but two Epistles of John, not to mention altering and corrupting the authentic Epistles of Paul throughout as well as writing six anti-Gnostic Epistles as well. As far as the Epistles of John, we are familiar with these man-made anti-Gnostic passages which state: "...every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God," from 1 John 4:2-3, and "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist," from 2 John 7. In spite of these creative forgeries by Roman Christianity, the Gnostics, even up to their wholesale murder eventually by Rome, maintained adamantly, that Jesus Christ of the Scriptures was not a historical personage and that he never literally or historically existed. In fact, the earliest of Gnostic Christians before the end of the first century C.E. were not even aware of the claims that a literal or historical Jesus Christ had existed, being that such a story and myth had not yet been created by Rome.**

**The roots of this Christian Gnosticism which was taught by St. Paul and others in the first century, were seen to go back through the Qumran Essenes all the way back to Alexandria, Egypt, and beyond Ancient Egypt even before that. Although there appeared to be, looking back in history from today, a clear division and demarcation between Gnostics and Christians in the earliest two centuries, in reality, there was not such a division in the middle of the first century. Biblical scholars tell us today that in the beginning, of the Common Era, Gnosticism was itself an expression best described as proto-Christianity. What I would find most amazing in my studies of the Christian Gnostics is that not only did they derive their teachings from the earlier Mystery Cults, and especially the metaphysical religion of Ancient Egypt, but at the same time many of these Gnostics claimed the Scriptures which later came to be called "Christian Scriptures," or should I say the very Scriptures which came from the temple walls, pyramids, and stone monuments in Ancient Egypt. These Ancient Egyptian texts and Scriptures would come to serve as the "skeleton" upon which the later New Testament Scriptures would be created and affixed. We must understand, however, these Scriptures were held Sacred by these Essene Gnostic Christians and although they were not exactly like those that later became recognized as the canonical Books which we have received in the Christian Bible today that were sanctioned by the later Church Fathers, editions quite similar to them existed among the Gnostic Essene Christians. Comparisons of these Scriptures today between these two opposing theological camps, in light of modern archaeological discoveries, have shown that these Gnostic Scriptures often contained the same or similar narratives, stories, and "sayings" in common with the later Roman Bible of which most of us are familiar. Unique to the Gnostic Scriptures, however, is the fact that they exist without the later forgeries and editing to which other copies of them would be submitted by the literalizers and forgers of Biblical texts at the hands of Roman monks. We need only recall how modern scholars in our day have shown conclusively in their references to the Essene Gnostics how Essenism and Christianity are alike in their essential features, so much so, that many scholars today believe that the earliest forms of Gnostic Christianity are nothing more than an outgrowth and a legitimate offspring of Judean Essenism. Essenism is only another name for the earliest Gnostic expressions of Christianity. It will be these Qumran Essenes who will, following the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., change their name from "Essenes" to "Christians" at Antioch according to Acts 11:26, but even in so doing, they continued to hold their ancient Scriptures sacred. This should tell us that at the very heart of the Essenes's religious dogmas is to be found "the indwelling Christ." Had this "Christ" been a literal and historical Christ/Messiah, then there**

**would not have been any need for the Essenes to remain separated from the Pharisee, who held a belief in the coming of an anointed literal human being as the Messianic seed of King David. The Essenes, however, having no historical Messiah, had no recourse, and were forced to remain separate from the Pharisees, given that their "Christ" was not a literal or historical Christ/Messiah as we have been falsely led to believe. The Essene's Christ was a Gnostic Christ, not a literal or historical Christ. Accordingly, being influenced by St. Paul, the Essenes taught a Christ that was the mystical, metaphysical, and indwelling Christ and Divine Mind that is raised from the dead in enlightened believers who experience this epiphany in this Earthly life, called in the Scriptures the "resurrection from the dead." No, this is not a physical rising after the death of their body of which I speak, but a Spiritual rising from the dead as St. Paul, or a later Pauline writer stated in the Book of Ephesians 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light..." This verse describes a Spiritual enlightening and awareness of the indwelling Christ awakened in mankind, not the resurrection of dead and decaying bodies as Rome has mistakenly misinterpreted the Scriptures and incorrectly taught now going on for 1,800 years.**

**It is these same Qumran Essenes of the first century C.E. who, according to Eusebius, the Father of Church History, and other Church Fathers, were said to be the "First Christians" and who were not only Christians, but were, centuries before the rise of Roman Christianity, equally said to be "actually in possession of those writings which are now our Gospels and Epistles." This would mean that "the Christ" in these proto-documents that later become the Gospels and Epistles at first, anyway, taught only a Gnostic mystical and metaphysical indwelling God/Christ and Divine Mind in mankind. That, of course, will change with the emergence of Orthodox Roman Christianity toward the end of the 2nd century where the wholesale forgery of the earliest New Testament of Marcion begins in earnest by the Roman Church, who gathered for their efforts the nickname "the Forgery Mill." William Kingsland on page 15 of his The Gnosis: Or Ancient Wisdom in the Christian Scriptures recited for us the statement of Henry Wace, the author of the Dictionary Of Christian Biography And Literature To The End Of The Sixth Century A.D., With An Account Of The Principal Sects and Heresies, who stated: "However much the Gnostics may have been indebted to heathen thought, they still wished and meant to be Christians, and indeed set up a claim to possess a deeper knowledge of Christian truth than the Psychici of the Church. Like their opponents (Petrines) they also appealed to Scripture in proof of their peculiar doctrines. Nay, it would even seem that the Gnostics were the first to make for that purpose a profitable appeal to the Scriptures of the New Testament…Their disciples were to be Christians, only elevated above the rest as acquainted with deeper mysteries…a Gnosis superior to the simple faith of the multitudes." Henry Wace, in his above quote, referred to the Psychici of the Church which were a sect within Christianity that was characterized by conversion and simple faith. These Psychici, from the Greek word "psyche," which means Soul, referred to those Christians who have some sensitivity to the Divine but lack genuine gnosis. Typically, the average Orthodox Christian was considered a psychic by the Gnostics. These Psychici were also called the "Petrines," who believed in the literal and historical interpretation of the Bible's texts. as well as the Messiah/Christ. These literal and historical interpreters of the Bible and its Scriptures constituted that branch of Christianity which was opposed to the Pauline or Gnostic branch of Christianity and their allegorical and metaphysical interpretation of all Scripture. Lost in Henry Wace's quote above about the Gnostics is the fact that it was these earliest Essene Gnostic Christian who were the first to appeal to Scriptures that later becomes recognized as the New Testament. It was these ancient Scriptures of the Essene-Gnostic-Christians, long before the supposed birth of a supposed historical Jesus of Nazareth, that the actual narratives that will later be incorporated into the Christian Bible were taken; first from the oral traditions and later the written works of the Ancient Wisdom religions and their Mysteries, many of which can be shown and traced as far back as Ancient Egypt some 5,000 or more years B.C.E. Over time, as modern Bible scholars tell us today, these literalizing, materializing, carnalizing Petrine Christians radically reinterpreted the Ancient Scriptures of these Essenes in such a way that the esoteric, allegorical, mystical, and metaphysical teachings of the Ancient Metaphysical Religions of antiquity, as far back as ancient Egypt, as well as the Essene-Gnostic-Christian doctrines in the earliest forms of Christianity, became, as William Kingsland on page 15 of his The Gnosis: Or Ancient Wisdom in the Christian Scriptures, "hardened and more and more dogmatic as the evolving government of the Church fell into the hands of prelates ambitious for worldly power, and quarreling among**

**themselves for precedence, this higher Spiritual knowledge became a heresy, and what records that are left of it are mainly the misrepresentation of its bitter opponents among the Church 'Fathers.'" In other words, Orthodox Christianity has lied about the Gnostic Christians and promoted themselves in the process and these lies are still with us some 1,800 years later.**

**Generally speaking, the earlier Epistles of Paul show many signs of Gnostic influence, while the later Epistles of Paul show signs of anti-Gnostic bias. Why is this? Was the Paul once a Gnostic and then repudiate his Gnosticism? Did the same Paul write the later anti-Gnostic Epistles attributed to him after he had a change of heart or theology, and this is the reason his later writings and Epistles now contradicts what he both said and taught earlier about "the Christ"? Would St. Paul have endured being whipped, stoned, and imprisoned for his Gnostic gospel if it were a lie? Could Paul have forgotten his own personal warning in his very first Epistle in the Book of Galatians, 1: 8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Could this Paul have turned against his experience with the living Christ in the Damascus wilderness let alone the early years of his ministry? As you are seeing, properly and systematically studied, the Paul of the New Testament presents a huge problem. Typical New Testament scholarship, itself devoid of a thorough understanding of the tenets of the Ancient Wisdom as well as the secrets held within Gnosticism, have characterized Gnosticism for almost two millennia as a heresy in agreement with the opinions of the Church Fathers. Ironically, it is just the reverse; Gnostic Christianity was once the position of the Orthodox before being dethroned by a more powerful Roman Empire. Typical of such Christian writings and scholarship up to our modern day, these typical and traditional Christian scholars have read the totality of the Pauline Epistles and judged them, reading the forgeries and interpolations in the texts as authentic Pauline passages, to attack Gnosticism as well as the Gnostic Christians and their "secret wisdom." Rome and their forgery of the anti-Gnostic texts and their insertion of interpolations into authentic Gnostic Pauline Epistles has been more successful than they could have ever imagined. Typical Christian scholarship has pointed out where Paul mentions "Christ crucified" in I Corinthians 2:2 and the "resurrection from the dead" in Romans 1:4. Of course, being indoctrinated since childhood that these dogmas refer to a literal and historical Jesus Christ, they fail to realize the truth of these Astronomical and Astrological dogmas that existed for thousands of years before the rise of Roman Orthodox Christianity. Typical Christian scholarship, devoid of competent knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom and Gnosticism, falsely maintain that such passages in the New Testament only reveal Paul's attitudes against his Gnostic opponents who Paul supposedly classified as "false apostles" in 2 Corinthians 11:13. These statements, as understood currently by Orthodox Christians, are read only in a literal and historical fashion; never once did it dawn upon these typical Christians that these same phrases describe mystical and metaphysical truths in Gnostic Christianity long before the rise of Orthodox Roman Christianity. If we read only typical Christian exegesis of the totality of the writings of the New Testament that today carry the Apostle Paul's name along with the abundant textual corruptions and forgeries of anti-Gnostic texts, then it is easy to come away from the reading of these Pauline Epistles with the idea that Paul utterly repudiated the Secret Wisdom and the gnosis that the Gnostic Christians taught about "the indwelling Christ" in the New Testament. But what if Paul did not write the majority of the letters and Epistles that carry his name in the New Testament and almost half of his writings in New Testament are Scriptural forgeries at the hands of the anti-Gnostics of early Orthodox Christianity?**

**We have in our possession today the writings of these second century Gnostic Christians and they astonishingly say in them that they claim St. Paul and his letters as the primary source of their Gnostic theology. Instead of repudiating the Apostle Paul as their greatest opponent, as we might expect given our typical Christian experience, these early Gnostics like Naassenes and Valentinians revere St. Paul as their primary source of their own Gnostic theology. How is this possible? These Gnostic writings of the earliest Christian Gnostics go so far as to declare the Apostle Paul as a "Gnostic initiate." The Valentinian Gnostic Christians go so far as to allege that their secret tradition offers direct access to Paul's own teaching of wisdom and Gnosis. This is rather strange in light that some of the later Epistles that carry Paul's name which are made to be anti-Gnostic in tone. I have already mentioned above that Clement of Alexandria, a famous Bishop, acknowledged in his**

**Stromata, that the Christian Gnostics received by Apostolic succession the "apostolic tradition" from Theudas, and Theudas is said to be a disciple of the Gnostic Paul and from him they received the secret traditions about Christ from the very lips of Paul, whom himself was Gnostic. Hence, it is astonishing to know that from the hands of these very Gnostics themselves and their writings which have remained buried for almost two thousand years away from any form of possible forgery or tampering, that their views of St. Paul are completely opposite from the views that we have inherited from the hands of known forgers of Scripture, the Orthodox Roman Church Fathers. This complete repudiation of what the Orthodox Church Fathers have said in making out St. Paul to be opposed to Gnostics has to be completely rethought immediately, and great suspicion must now fall upon the reliability and trustworthiness of the anti-Gnostic writings in the New Testament along with the anti-gnostic Epistles supposedly written by St. Paul at the end of his life which Rome again brings to light to further their anti-gnostic biases. These new corrective perspectives on the supposed anti-Gnosticism of St. Paul from the archaeological discoveries at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, no more than sixty years ago, have caused a revolution in New Testament scholarship in that they have shown extraordinary new evidence for the profound Pauline influence among the earliest Gnostic Christians. The Gnostic Paul's influence upon the earliest Christian Gnostics is completely contrary to almost half of the Pauline writings in the New Testament that are anti-Gnostic in their tone and persuasion. These anti-Gnostic Epistles now stand highly suspect being that due to the Nag Hammadi discoveries which reveal conclusively that Paul was considered to heralded as the "Apostle of the Gnostic Christians" in the early centuries of the Common Era. Thanks to the Nag Hammadi writings, hidden in the sands of the Earth away from all possible tampering and forgery for almost two thousand years, the truth has come crying forth from the rocks of the Earth to expose possibly one of the greatest deceptions ever foisted upon the whole of mankind; that being the lying deceptions of Orthodox Christianity and their heresiologists. It will be these Roman Christian heresiologists who will forge untold numbers of Scriptures and passages in the creation of their anti-gnostic 2nd New Testament in their efforts to overturn the Soul Science of the Ancient Wisdom and with it the metaphysical truths regarding the incarnation of Divine Mind as Christ in every Child of God who has ever lived. In place of this Ancient Wisdom which have now been kept from mankind for almost 1,800 years, Roman Christianity has foisted upon the unsuspecting and "believing" world a literal and historical Jesus Christ whom these Gnostic Christians, carrying on the Ancient Wisdom and Spiritual teachings of Ancient Egypt, said never existed nor ever lived or would ever live as a human being, being that "the Krst/Christ" had always been only believed to be the mystical incarnation of God evolving as Divine Mind in every form of material existence, as well as humanity. These mystical and metaphysical themes of Pauline theology are shown in these Nag Hammadi writings to have been taken up and developed in a systematic fashion for several centuries by these early Gnostic Christians, both Jews and Gentile. In particular, Pauline theology was adopted and spread by Valentinus and his disciples. In these Gnostic writings of Nag Hammadi, Egypt, that escaped the fires of Rome, owing that they were buried out of sight of Roman authorities, we find the Gnostic Paul's thoughts and teachings from his seven authentic Epistles which are included in the New Testament today. These same religious thoughts of the Gnostic Paul are shown to have be alluded to repeatedly throughout the whole of the writings of these earliest Christian Gnostics. For two thousand years this knowledge of the true Krst/Christ had been kept from mankind, and in its place, we heard only the resounding reiteration of forged anti-Gnostic Epistles to whom St. Paul's name had been deceptively affixed by the Roman Church. In so doing, Rome is responsible for falsely promoting an erroneous belief in a literal and historical Jesus Christ as the fruit of Roman imagination and gross misunderstanding of the Ancient Wisdom and the ancient Scriptures as far back as Ancient Egypt. The Nag Hammadi writings, uncovered under the sands of Egypt, when now compared to and the untold number of correspondences recognized between them and the seven authentic Epistles of Paul in the New Testament, explains why St. Paul was held in the highest regard in the writings of these earliest Gnostic Christians and why St. Paul was, for these Gnostic Christians, "their apostle." This new evidence from these newly available resources, little more than sixty years ago, has provided in the Nag Hammadi Library discovery irrefutable support of the Valentinus' claim that Paul exerted a great influence upon early Gnostic theology and religious beliefs - apparently a far greater influence than past Bible scholars have suspected, having never had in their possession such literally finds from the very pens of these earliest Gnostic Christians themselves. Having not in their possession these first-hand writings and evidence substantiating St. Paul as the driving force behind the strong influence of these Gnostic Christians who would later produce the First New**

**Testament, all these past Christian Bible scholars had to go on was the lying oral traditions and equally deceptive writings of an anti-Gnostic Roman Catholicism which, like Irenaeus, falsely characterized these mystical and metaphysical Gnostic Christians as the "ministers of Satan." Consequently, a flood of books ensued from these deceived Christian authors that blasphemed horribly these early Gnostic Christians and their collective efforts has brainwashed the later generations of Christians and Christian writers who were not privy in their day to these Nag Hammadi writings and their actual contents. Scholars tell us that these Nag Hammadi discoveries overturned completely two thousand years of typical Christian exegesis upon the New Testament and the very nature of Christ as well as the belief in a supposed literal and historical Jesus Christ. Today, in light of the newly available resources like the Nag Hammadi discovery of the Gnostic Christian writings which cite St. Paul as their living apostle, no longer do these old heresiological accounts of these dishonest Church Fathers and their supposed "honest research" into the early Church need be accepted as true one second longer. Before the very courts of Heaven, the testimony of Roman Catholicism in regard to these earliest Gnostic Essene Christians who long believed as far back as Ancient Egypt in the true mystical and metaphysical Krst/Christ, a belief held sacred for thousands of years before the rise of Roman Orthodoxy, is declared to be the biggest lie ever to have fallen upon the ears of humankind. Today, in light of these Nag Hammadi discoveries, no longer are these Gnostic Christians to be easily dismissed as "heretics," as the Church Father Irenaeus, the famous heresiologist, would do in his day. Irenaeus accused the Gnostic Christians in his Against Heresies that their testimony cannot be believed because it is totally founded only upon oral traditions and that such an unprovable foundation was unfit to serve as the foundation for their religious and outrageous claims that the Cosmic God is living and moving and having His being in every human being. The Christian Gnostics responded to Irenaeus' charge by saying that their own supposed unwritten sources are nothing other than St. Paul's own secret wisdom traditions and authentic Epistles when afford them with the true and eternal truths of man's Soul. Irenaeus. familiar with the writings of the Gnostics knew full well when reading them when he was reading a Pauline passage; hence, such false claims on his part to denigrate the Christian Gnostics were his desperate attempts to slander the Christian Gnostics, thus promoting the proto-Roman goal of world conquest through fear and ignorance, the Roman empire having no longer enough swords for the task. Hence, Irenaeus depended on no one knowing the truth about these Gnostic Christians; lies would have to do.**

**What we fail to think in reading the comments of the anti-Gnostic Church today, is that in Irenaeus' day, not only Irenaeus, but the whole of the Church Fathers were privy to the writings of the early Christian Gnostics, and having read them, the whole lot of them Church Fathers would have been fully conversant that these Gnostic Christian writings were full of Pauline Scriptures and dogmas. Only a blind man would have failed to make the connection; unless of course, the religious agenda of Rome was to denounce Gnostic Christianity to such a degree, that in the vacuum created by the Gnostic Christians' demise, the emerging Roman Church would easily assume the previous position once held by the Christian Gnostics and use it for world conquest instead of the liberation of the Souls of humanity as did the Gnostic Christians. Eventually the Gnostic Christians would eventually fall to the swords of Roman Christianity, men, women, and children by the millions. These heresy-hunters knew full well that they lied when they blamed the Gnostic Christians for building a religious belief system only off "oral traditions" and we know this for certain today as some of the most famous tractates ever written by the earliest Gnostic Christians were recovered in the Nag Hammadi discoveries. In these Nag Hammadi discoveries, the writings of the earliest Gnostic Christians reveal the influence of the Gnostic Paul, his Scriptures and esoteric concepts that we see more commonly connected to his Gnostic gospel in his Epistles. In these recovered Nag Hammadi texts we find reflected the dogmas expressed in the seven authentic Epistles of the Gnostic Paul. Likewise, in these Nag Hammadi texts we find expressed the similar if not same religious beliefs regarding the mystical indwelling and evolving Christ and Divine Mind in mankind from beginning to end. These early Church Fathers knew that the writings of the Gnostics were heavily influence by Pauline theology, however, the ignorant and illiterate masses often did not. Thus, the untaught masses were ripe for deception as the deceiving anti-Gnostic jargon issued forth not only in Roman pens but from the pulpits of their Churches for centuries throughout the whole of Europe and beyond.**

**Ironically, for those today who knew the truth of the earliest expression of the Christian faith, it is these**

**branded "heretics" or Gnostic Christians in the earliest centuries of the Christian Church which are seen, in light of today's Information Age, to be the true "Orthodox" expression of earliest Christianity. The majority of Christians in the world today, never once suspecting that the Pauline Scriptures they read in their Bible and shed tears over in their Churches and in private readings of their Bibles are the fruit of Roman lies, textual forgeries, and distortions of a most Ancient Spiritual truth going as far back as the creation of mankind, a truth regarding the evolving Soul in mankind that is no longer shouted from the mountain tops. In light of the knowledge forthcoming in today's Information Age, no longer do the falsehoods of the Church Fathers and their lying heresiological writings, both in their fancy bound books as well as in the Bible have, for a moment longer, to be tolerated and allowed to be imposed upon the minds of today's expression of Christianity and its unenlightened. No longer does the Christianity of today any longer need to tolerate being robbed of the Spiritual truths and facts about these early Gnostic Christian metaphysical believers and their teachings regarding the resurrecting and indwelling God/Christ in man. Mother Earth has brought forth in our life time the factual evidence that redeems the Gnostic Christians and exposes their heroism and determination to preserve, even up and till their martyrdom by the millions, the Spiritual truth and destiny of mankind as an evolving Spiritual creation, being so much more than just a human being he is so often accustomed to be called and defined by those who don't know the truth of the Christ living within the whole of humanity. That is why the Gnostics were called "Knowers."**

**In light of the fact that the Nag Hammadi discoveries revealed the Gnostic Pauline writings and their influence beyond the whole of the Gnostic writings, then no longer does Irenaeus' deception when he said that the Gnostic Christians have no Scriptural exegesis or basis for their religious beliefs other than flimsy oral traditions hold water. Irenaeus knew better, having in his possession in 180 C.E. both the Pauline corpus of writings as well as the Gnostic writings where, when reading them, he could not help but acknowledge that the Pauline Scriptures and Spiritual ideas jumped off the pages before him when reading the writings of the Gnostic Christians. Today, the Church must be told the truth that the whole corpus of Gnostic writings now appears to be heavily influenced by St. Paul's influence and his seven authentic Epistles. No longer must we be led to believe the lies in the writings of many of the early Church Fathers like Irenaeus and the rest of his falsifiers who said that Christian Gnostic sources for their Scriptures and religious beliefs are only oral traditions which are alien to the New Testament and consequently not part of the "authentic Christian" tradition. In fact, it is the supposed Orthodox Christian tradition with its literal and historical Christ Jesus which is alien to the original Christian tradition which was Gnostic and had always been Gnostic long before these Gnostic Qumran Essenes changed their name to "Christians" in Antioch as the Book of Acts 11:26 attests.**

**Of course, this anti-Gnostic Paul of Roman invention never was a historical person; such a creation only lived within the devious minds of an anti-Gnostic Roman Christianity during the 2nd through the 5th century when most of the textual forgery of the what would later be called the New Testament Scriptures occurred. In restoring the truth of Rome's treatment of the Gnostic Scriptures while at the same time exposing the anti-Gnostic textual interpolations in the New Testament, I will spare no ink in pointing out the historical problems and contradictions that exist surrounding this supposed historical anti-Gnostic Paul of Roman mind, especially in regard to the presentation of Rome's interpretation of "the Christ" under the disguise of the anti-Gnostic Paul. Hence, the fruit of such discovery reveals that two different Christ Jesus are being taught in the Pauline Epistles. First, we will see the Gnostic Christ taught by the true historical Gnostic Paul which is only a mystical and metaphysical indwelling evolving Presence of God in mankind, often called Divine Mind. The other Jesus Christ, taught by the anti-Gnostic Paul, is the Jesus Christ of the literalizers and carnalizers, the literal and historical Jesus Christ of the Jerusalem Petrines which, over time, yield their mantle to the equally pernicious literalizers and historicizers of Orthodox Roman Christianity. The Gnostic Paul never once gave place in his writings to a physical or historical Jesus in his teaching. The true Paul's Christ was always non-historical. If a literal or historical Christ is to be found in the Pauline Epistles, then it is the work of the forgers of the Gnostic Paul's Scriptures. The presence of any anti-Gnostic dogmas attributed to St. Paul in the Epistles is the work of the later forgers and corrupters of the Gnostic Paul's Epistles. The Gnostic Paul's references to Christ will always be seen to be existing on the Spiritual plane which usually is always accomplishing a Spiritual**

**deliverance, salvation, or resurrection of a person's Spiritual realization of his own true indwelling divinity. Whenever we find St. Paul speaking of Christ on an Earthly plane or an Earthly existence of Christ, then these literal and historical descriptions of the Christ are tale-tale signs of more textual forgery, most likely at the hands of either the earlier Jerusalem Petrines, or later Roman Christianity. Obviously, nowhere in any of the Pauline writings will we find the Gnostic Paul claim that he knew a physical Jesus or a Christ after the flesh. This is why there is no mention of a virgin birth or any human birth. What isn't so obvious is that the earliest Biblical Gospel of Mark and its writer, like the Gnostic Paul, never makes mention of the supposed virgin birth of Jesus Christs. It is as if both the earliest Gospel writer of the Gospel of Mark as well as the Gnostic Paul never heard of a literal or historical Jesus of Nazareth or this famed virgin birth that crops up later in Scriptural history. What is most interesting is the fact that this silence concerning a literal or historical Jesus along with absence of any mention of a virgin birth coincides with many other Christian teachers during that same early time period of 50-60 C.E. This should speak to us that it is evident that the earliest expression of what the Bible calls Christianity never believed in a physical or historical Jesus Christ or a virgin birth of a historical Jesus Christ. It should also tell us that the earliest expression of Christianity in the first century C.E. only a belief in the Spiritual Christ incarnated into the hearts and Souls of every Child of God. This Gnostic Christ is the only Messiah that is to come to every human being, and does come with his human birth. This indwelling Christ as Savior conquers evil in the Spiritual realm which is found in the hearts of people the world over. It is here by way of a New Birth, called being "born again," otherwise called "born from the dead" during this Earthly life, that mankind aspires to a higher Earthly existence in the Spirit realm.**

**This new birth of mankind was likened by the Gnostic Christians to a Spiritual crucifixion and resurrection. Few if any Christians are aware that the earliest understanding of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ was Astronomical and Celestial, being that concepts like crucifixion (cross) and resurrection (rebirth) were Cosmic symbols connected to the Sun and its path through the Zodiac, both ascending or descending over the Equinoxes and Solstices in relation to the ecliptic in its yearly solar cycle. It just so happens that the plane of the ecliptic cuts the plane of the Earth's celestial equator at an angle of 23 1/2 degrees, forming if you will, a cross in Outer Space exactly resembling the Greek letter which is the first letter of the name Christos. Here is but one hint, and just the one we want of a Cosmic Christ, or Divine Mind, crucified in space, long ages before a literal and historical version of Christ/Messiah was born with the Jewish people, Jerusalem Petrines, and later Roman Christians. We must remember that there are two equinoxes, the autumnal and the vernal - the autumnal ushering in shorter days and longer nights, and therefore indicating the descent of the Soul into darkened matter of incarnation. The vernal equinox indicates longer days and shorter nights, and hence indicates resurrection and re-birth connected with the Sun's birth from the deadness of Winter at the Winter Solstice. No wonder this corresponding new birth of the Sun, or the re-birth of Christ in man was noted by saying "Christ is our Passover," given that the Vernal Equinox is also called Easter which occurs at the Vernal or Spring equinox. Hence, before us in Cosmic symbology is the story of the descent and rebirth of the Sun, Soul, Christ, and Divine Mind as it falls, incarnates, and evolves in "matter" in an eternal cycle that knows no end. Thus, the Gnostic Christians like St. Paul saw mankind as being involved in a Cosmic process where he had his beginning countless ages before the worlds were made. Mankind was the objective of the whole solar system. Man, the highest of all of God's created beings, is the child of God, and sooner or later mankind must restore his union with God from Whom he came. Hence, every phenomenon in the Universe is in a sense related to mankind. Being a Cosmic being, the Gnostic Christians were fully aware that when reading Scripture, they needed to look below the Earthly understanding, or the literal or historical understanding of Scripture. These Gnostic Christians realized that they needed to look deeper in the Sacred Scriptures beneath the milk to the Strong Meat of the Word, to the Spiritual, Celestial, and metaphysical understanding of Scripture if the truth about man's Soul and the incarnated evolving Christ in mankind was ever to be understood in this current Earthly expression of the Soul's existence. Thus, only in looking below the surface of Scripture for their true and inner meanings, while at the same time remembering that the "letter," or the literal understanding of Sacred Scripture, "killeth" but the "Spiritual" interpretation of Scripture giveith life, the Gnostic Christians like St. Paul were fully aware that the literal meaning of the Bible is often not what the original writers of these Sacred Scriptures intended, and anything less than a mystical and metaphysical interpretation and understanding of**

**the Scriptures meant only death to the Spirit in man. Such Bible reading was deadly to man's Spirit and Soul. Hence, we see the the foolishness of interpreting what was mystical and metaphysical as if literal and historical. This explains why the Gnostic Paul could never and would never teach or give place in his writings to a literal or historical Christ. This Astronomical phenomena of Soul Science was later engrafted into the "Christ Story" where mistakenly these dogmas of crucifixion and resurrection become literalized and historicized by Orthodox Roman Christianity as if events pertaining to the physical realm and body instead of man's Soul and its evolving incarnation in "matter." Lacking the keys to the Cosmic understanding of Christ and the Ancient Mysteries, what was to the ancient Mystery Religions mystical and metaphysical becomes ignorantly in the hands of Rome historicized and literalized when applied to its "Jesus Story." This Astronomical, mystical, and metaphysical study of the "Jesus Story" is possibly one of the greatest studies that a person can undertake in his Earthly life as they go back and read the words ascribed by the Gnostic Paul in his seven authentic Epistles where he comes to finally see that the Gnostic Paul taught only a mystical and metaphysical indwelling and evolving Divine Mind as Christ who had its origins in the Cosmos among the stars. The Earthly Christ, as taught by the anti-Gnostic Paul and as seen in the much later-written Gospels which just so happen to appear historically for the first time with Irenaeus around 180 C.E., are the first instance where the mystical and metaphysical Jesus Christ appears in official print as the Earthly Christ where irrevocably fixed to it is a literal and historical interpretation for all time.**

**Given what we have seen above, we should no longer be surprised when finding multiple editing and alteration of the earlier Gnostic Christian writings by Rome. Hence, multiple authorships can be seen in the contradiction of earlier teachings at the hands of the supposed same author, often on the same page or in the same books in the Bible. Given enough study, one can become adept in discovering numerous passages in the Pauline Epistles that when compared, are seen to be corruptions of other passages and ideas expressed by the supposed same writer. These contradictions and negations in Scripture are sure signs of textual tampering and forgery. Given that the Gnostic Christ was and had always been non-historical, being that it had Astronomical roots and was an Astronomical prophecy since the beginning of the human race, it is said of Christ allegorically in Psalms 110: 4 that "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." It is also said in Scripture regarding this Melchizedek in the Book of Hebrews 7:1-3: "For this Melchisedec...Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." It is from this passage, and similar other mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical passages in the Bible, that the ancients derived their understanding that the Christ was the "ever-coming one" who could not become a human being, being that the Christ is without father, without mother, without human descent. Being that the Christ has "neither beginning of days, nor end of life" he has no end to his existence. This Christ and Divine Mind is like the Son of God who functioned as a priest; hence, the Christ was understood by the ancients to be the mediator between man's conscious finite mind and the infinite Divine Mind within every human being. Given these metaphysical truths, we now can better understand that the Gnostic Paul had nothing to do with supposed genealogies regarding the literal or historical Jesus Christ. In fact, we find the Gnostic Paul who understood the Christ as non-historical saying to Titus in 1:14 to not give heed to Jewish fables that turn from truth. The Gnostic Paul continues in Titus 3:9 where he stated: "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions...for they are unprofitable and vain." Once again, the Gnostic Paul tells Timothy in 1:4 1 "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do." Thus we see, that the Gnostic Paul knew that no genealogy of Jesus Christ could ever be correct because the Christ is without Earthly father and mother and has no Earthly descent. Thomas Paine in his The Age Of Reason: Being An Investigation Of True And Fabulous Theology stated on page 141: "The first chapter of Matthew begins with giving a genealogy of Jesus Christ; and in the third chapter of Luke there is also given a genealogy of Jesus Christ. Did these two agree, it would not prove the genealogy to be true, because it might, nevertheless, be a fabrication ; but as they contradict each other in every particular, it proves falsehood absolutely. If Matthew speaks truth, Luke speaks falsehood; and if Luke speaks truth, Matthew speaks falsehood; and as there is no authority for believing one more than the other, there is no authority for believing either; and if they cannot be believed even in the first thing they say, and set out to prove, they are not entitled to be believed in anything they say afterwards."**

**Randal Helms, on page 41 of his Gospel Fictions stated " Both Matthew and Luke added birth narratives to their revisions of Mark, basing them on legends quite irreconcilable with each other." G.A. Wells stated on the first three pages of his Can We Trust the New Testament?: "The gospels included in the New Testament (NT) are widely agreed to have been written between A.D. 70 and 100. In these four gospels, it is claimed that Jesus taught in Galilee in the opening decades of the first century, worked miracles there, or what at any rate were taken for miracles, and died in Jerusalem at the behest of the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. And yet, as I have reiterated in The Jesus Legend (1996) and The Jesus Myth (1999), none of these things are claimed, or even mentioned, in the earliest surviving Christian documents. In other words, none of these supposed historical events are touched upon in extant Christian documents which are either earlier than the gospels or early enough to have been written independently of them (that is, before those gospels or the traditions underlying them had become generally known in Christian circles)...The most striking feature of the early documents is that they do not set Jesus' life in a specific historical situation. There is no Galilean ministry, and there are no parables, no miracles, no Passion in Jerusalem, no indication of time, place of attendant circumstances at all. The words Calvary, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Galilee never appear in the early epistles, and the word Jerusalem is never used there in connection with Jesus (Doherty, pp. 68, 73). Instead, Jesus figures as a basically supernatural personage who took the "likeness" of man, "emptied" then of his supernatural powers (Phil 2:7)." Modern scholars tell us today that the reason why the writer of Mark's Gospel omitted the birth of Jesus was because of the early Gnostic influence in Christianity which contended that the Jesus of the oral traditions and legend was only a Spiritual and mystical myth and was never to be understood as if physically born in the flesh. Thus, Randel Helms makes a good case for explaining the need for Orthodox Christianity to tamper with and forge the earliest Gnostic Christian writings and their gospels, given that the earliest Gnostic Christians denied the physical resurrection of Jesus and taught that Jesus had no physical body and was of a non-physical nature. Randel Helms, on page 41 of his Gospel Fictions stated thusly that "The earliest Gospel could easily play into the hands of those heretical Gnostic Christians who were teaching a Christology and notion of Jesus' sonship quite unacceptable to the orthodox tradition." If this was the normal belief considering Jesus as the Christ long before the rise of Orthodox Roman Christianity, and it appears from the earliest records of Christianity, that it was, then it is easy to see why for Gnostics like St. Paul as well as other Gnostic Christians, that any supposed genealogy of Jesus Christ was not worthy to even be bothered with since they all were absolute foolishness and the fruit of a gross perversion and misinterpretation of the Sacred Scriptures concerning the doctrine of mystical and metaphysical Christ. All genealogies of Christ are for the Gnostic Paul fables, being that he used this same word in each verse when he addressed the problem of forged genealogies of Jesus Christ in his day with both Titus and Timothy. These facts help us to understand why the Gnostic Christians rejected the humanity of Christ and spoke against all clumsy attempts in other's writings to include genealogies that were intended to prove the human descent of Christ. Christ is not a human being, and can never become one. Hence, any and all genealogies were consistently rejected by the Gnostic Christians because their Christ is and had always been Spiritual, not historic. Likewise, St. Paul, the Gnostic, repudiated all vain genealogies who attempted to establish a human line of descent for the Christ. There can be no genealogy for a Christ that is not flesh-and-blood. The Gnostic Paul's Christ had always been Spiritual and every day of his life he rejected a flesh-and-blood Jesus that was preached by advocates of an emerging Historic Christianity who had totally misunderstood and misinterpreted the Ancient Wisdom and its indwelling Christ.**

**The Gnostic Paul's admonishment to avoid foolish questions and genealogies is of great importance and fully warranted when you consider that according to the Jewish Bible, one of the requirements for the messiah is that he must be a descendant of King David. All of the major Messianic prophecies indicate this (Ezekiel 34:23, 37:21-28; Isaiah 11:1-9; Jeremiah 23:5, 30:7-10, 33:14-16; and Hosea 3:4-5). In Jeremiah chapter 33, verse 17, God says that the royal House of David will never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel. The Christian Bible, recognizing this vital requirement, spends almost two chapters to establish the genealogical record of Jesus as going back to King David. However, when the genealogical records, as recorded by Matthew and Luke are examined, critical problems are revealed that prove the falsehood of both. In the gospel of Matthew, the genealogy of Joseph, who was the husband of Mary, is traced back to King David. However, the writer of the Gospel of Matthew then shoots himself in the foot by claiming that Joseph was never the father of Jesus. He**

**does this in order to establish his claim that Jesus did not have a normal birth but a virgin birth. According to the writer of the Gospel of Matthew, Mary never had sexual relations with her husband Joseph, and that Jesus was conceived miraculously through the "Holy Spirit." Therefore, since the genealogy as recorded in Matthew only traces Joseph back to King David, but, in order to make room of a supposed virgin birth, can never connects Joseph as the father of Jesus, then it becomes crystal clear that the Jesus of the Gospel of Matthew has no established genealogical record going back to bloodline of King David, thus invalidating Jesus as the fulfillment of the Jewish Messiah. The supposed genealogy in the Gospel of Matthew for Jesus provides him with no Earthly father, and even worse, does not describe him as an actual human being. The genealogy of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is a nonsensical forgery! If we now look to Luke's genealogy, we find that Christian apologists claim that Jesus also traces himself back to King David through his mother, Mary. This claim is made relative to the genealogy recorded in the third chapter of the book of Luke, which is also traced back to King David. Modern Biblical scholars tell us that there are also a number of problems with this claim. First and foremost, there is no evidence at all that the genealogy listed in Luke is that of Mary. The chapter clearly says that this is the genealogy of Joseph and not Mary. In fact, the name of Mary isn't even mentioned anywhere in it. Even if Mary could trace herself back to King David, it still wouldn't help Jesus. According to the Torah, the mother, the matrilineal lineage determines if someone is Jewish according to Deuteronomy 7:3-4, but tribal affiliation and family genealogy can only be traced through the person's father, or the patrilineal lineage in accordance with Exodus 28:4, 29:9-30, 30:30, 40:15; Numbers 36; Genesis 49:10, I Kings 11:4, and I Chronicles 17:11-19. Even if it could be maintained that a family line could be passed on through the mother, Mary herself was not from a legitimate messianic family. According to the Bible, the messiah must be a descendant of King David through his son Solomon according to II Samuel 7:12-13; I Chronicles 17:11-14, 22:10, 28:4-7. Although in the the book of Matthew, the genealogy of Joseph is traced back to King David through his son Solomon, it is as well traced down to the cursed King Jeconiah whose blood kin is never to be allowed to set upon the throne of Israel, thus excluding Jesus. However, in the book of Luke, the genealogy goes from David, not through his son Solomon, but through his son Nathan. The problem is that even if one wants to maintain that the book of Luke is tracing the genealogy of Mary and that it's possible to pass on genealogical lineage through the mother, Mary would still not be of help to Jesus, because her line does not go back to David through the King's son, Solomon. The jury is in; both of these genealogies are not actual genealogies of a true historical person; rather, they are the later desperate attempts by Roman Christian Orthodoxy to provide a supposed historical existence for Jesus as the Christ/Messiah since Gnostic Christianity had for ages taught the Christ is not a human being, is not of human descent, and is purely a mystical and metaphysical manifestation of the Spirit of God incarnated and indwelling within mankind.**

**Roman Christian textual forgery of the Gnostic Paul's writings knew no bounds, and Rome hardly slowed down in their corruption and alteration of Gnostic Scriptures when the opportunity presented itself. For example, we know that the Book of Romans is an authentic Epistles written by the true Gnostic Paul in the New Testament. In fact, Rome put the Book of Romans first in New Testament for several reasons. Rome, and St. Paul, the apostle to the Gentile world, was to be the authority upon which Rome will establish the world-wide Church. We need look no further than the opening of the Book of Romans, the first of Gnostic Paul's epistles, to the 3rd verse, no less, for the first example of textual forgery of the Gnostic Paul's Epistles. Before us, only 3 verses into the New Testament Epistles, do we find the first forgery and interpolation of the Pauline writings. Here, in the 3rd verse of the New Testament, following the Gospels, the Gnostic Paul is made to say by Rome's textual forgery: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;..." A true Gnostic Christian like the real St. Paul would never have stated nor could believe that Jesus or the mystical and metaphysical Christ indwelling each Child of God was limited to but one person let alone the solitary human seed of King David after the flesh. Right in the very beginning of the New Testament Epistles, following immediately after the Gospels, the lies in the New Testament Epistles begin. It sure didn't take Rome long to begin their textual and Scriptural corruption of St. Paul's authentic writings. No Gnostic Christian would ever, of his own free, admit that the Word or Christ was made "flesh" to was the seed, or the product of human reproduction in the lineage of anyone, including King David. There is no way that the Christ of the Gnostic Paul could have been without genealogy but at the same time be the seed of physical seed of Abraham**

**or David. Such a thought, or teaching for that matter, is a complete reversal of the whole of what the Gnostic Paul and Christian Gnosticism taught. When St. Paul, the Gnostic, rejected any and all genealogies of Jesus Christ, he rejected as well the human descent of the Messiah from bloodline of a King David.**

**Even in I Corinthians 12:3 we find St. Paul, the Gnostic, stating that "...no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." This Christ is Spiritual; no man can say that Jesus is Lord from events taken from verifiable human history since the historical Jesus Christ never lived and his whole story, when interpreted literally and historically, is a gross perversion of mystical and metaphysical Spiritual truth. The birth of the mystical Christ is not in a manger or cave, but in the mind of mankind. This explains why neither the Gnostic St. Paul, nor Marcion, the Gnostic follower of Paul, ever mentioned in any of their writings Jesus of Nazareth, nor that he was born in Bethlehem of Mary, virgin or not. Let us not forget that St. Paul, being a Gnostic, was an Adept and wise master-builder in the Gnostic Mysteries according to I Corinthians 3:10, and even a Master of the Ancient Hidden Wisdom of the Ages. Hence, such a person as the Gnostic Paul would never have made the mistake of mistaking a fable or a Spiritual myth for a historical fact, let alone, constructed his Christology upon such a misunderstanding of the Gnostic and metaphysical truths of the Spiritual realm. Nor, could he accept a perversion of this truth being taught to others, especially when they were his converts and disciples. For all true Gnostic Christians, their Christ of the Gnosis could never be made flesh. This meant that all Gnostics were to be forever opposed to the false teachings of Orthodox Christianity who, according to Mark 12:24 24 "...err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?" Roman Christianity's fatal mistake, a mistake that exists yet today and has infected her Protestant daughter as well, is that esoteric Spiritual myth in their hands had been made exoteric by those who were ignorant of the Ancient Mysteries, and in so doing, mistakenly converted the Gnosis into supposed history that never was. We must look to the Petrines like Peter and James connected with the Jerusalem Church for those who mistakenly converted esoteric and metaphysical Spiritual truth into supposed exoteric human history. It is to St. Paul, the Gnostic we must look, for the explanation of the ancient Gnosis. It is time to recognize that when we read the Gnostic Pauls' admonition and warning to his disciples to avoid the preaching of that "other gospel" and that "other Jesus" he is referring to Peter and James and others who had been misled by their incorrect exegesis of their own Scriptures. When the Gnostic Paul continually refers in his Epistles to his gospel, as he in the Book of Romans when he stated in Romans 16:25 25: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began...," he is referring not to the gospel of the Jerusalem Church, not that which will come at the hands of the Roman Church, he refers to his gospel of Gnosis.**

**Other anti-Gnostic interpolations abound in the Pauline Epistles. For example, if we look at I Timothy, supposedly written by Paul, but only forged in his name, Jesus Christ is said to have stood before Pontius Pilate in the flesh as we see in 1 Timothy 6:13: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;..." Notice if you will, only 3 lines below this verse in I Timothy 6:16, this same Jesus Christ is described quite differently as if he is not a human being: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting." I Timothy 6:16 is Paul's Christ of the Gnosis, the Christ who could never be made flesh and which never partook of an Earthly historical existence and never could have consequently stood like a human being in front of Pontius Pilate as the text alludes. Such a presentation of an Earthly Jesus in the New Testament is the work of anti-Gnostic Orthodox Christians attempting to reverse in the minds of the readers of the Gnostic Paul's Epistles his depiction of the Gnostic Christ.**

**If we look at I Corinthians 15: 51-52, we find the Gnostic Paul again speaking of mankind's Spiritual transformation in death and the continuance of his consciousness when he stated: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,..." Following on the heels of this pronouncement, the ending of true verse of the Gnostic Paul which we no longer have in the New Testament, is the anti-Gnostic interpolation by a later forger of the Pauline Epistles where an an anti-Gnostic interpolation is inserted into a text originally written by the Gnostic Paul. Such forgery makes it**

**appear as if the Gnostic Paul is now advocating a belief in the supposed resurrection of a dead physical body: "...at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised...." Such a statement is impossible for the Gnostic Paul because as a Gnostic, St. Paul did not believe in the physical resurrection of a dead body. The mystery of the Gnosis of which St. Paul truly spoke, never included the physical resurrection of a dead body. The resurrection of a dead body as the supposed teaching of the Gnostic Paul by this anti-Gnostic textual forgery, is 180 degrees opposed to what the the true Gnostic Paul actually believed as well as what other Gnostics historically taught in the earliest centuries of the Common Era. Many of Paul's countrymen believed in the physical resurrection of the dead body since they were mistaken not only concerning Ancient Egyptian mummification, but were misled by the Pharisees who held to the resurrection of the body, a doctrine which was taught by Zoroaster to the Chaldeans, and which had been brought from Chaldea by the Jews, on their return home from their Babylonian captivity when freed by the Persians. The Sadducees, if we recall, denounced such a belief in the physical resurrection of the body. In his own personal writings, at times the Gnostic Paul often used language that might lead a person to suppose that he believed in the physical resurrection of the body, yet at other times, the Gnostic Paul was very plain that he did not believe in the physical resurrection of the body when he stated, for example in 1 Corinthians, 15:50, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.'' Such language by St. Paul is incompatible with the idea of the resurrection of the physical body. As a Gnostic, when St. Paul spoke of the resurrection, he was referring to the eternal survival of the Spirit in mankind. If we read closely the writings of the Gnostic Paul, it is undeniable that in some passages he writes about resurrection as a present rather than a future event. For example, in the Book of Romans, the Gnostic Paul says that all Christians who have been baptized have been "buried with him (Christ)." This baptism is a symbolic death that precedes a subsequent resurrection that is to be experienced in this Earthly life. Next, Paul promises that Christians will be raised through a "resurrection like his (Christ's)." The Gnostic Paul does not say that this resurrection will be in the future, he tells these Christians in the Book of Romans 6:11, that they are now to "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord... He follows this us in Romans 6:22 by stating: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." This was not a future experience, this was a present reality in the lives of his followers. Roman Orthodox Christianity comes behind the Gnostic Paul and reads the Book of Romans believing such passages meant that one's physical baptism ensured them that Christ will restore them to physical life after their physical death. The Gnostic Paul, as well as all Gnostic Christians, rejected the future interpretation of such Pauline verses. Instead, as Elaine Pages, in her book The Gnostic Paul states, said of the Gnostic exegesis of this verse that "They claim that...Paul is not speaking here literally of a future bodily resurrection: instead he is speaking symbolically of the process of receiving gnosis."**

**The writer of the Book of Colossians also describes the resurrection from the dead as a present-day event and not a future event. The author of Colossians stated: in Colossians 3:1-10: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, not on things on the earth...put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge..." This word "knowledge" is the key word for the Gnostic Christians, meaning as it does, "Gnosis." In this passage putting off the old man and putting on the new man is symbolic for Spiritual awakening to one's true Spiritual nature and one's indwelling divinity, called in the Scriptures being "the resurrection from the dead," which again, is described as a present day event that is to be experienced by every living human being on Earth. Man is not to live as the animal body and nature which provides the vessel for his Soul's Spiritual evolution. Hence, the resurrection of the dead is a Gnostic mystery for Spiritual awakening that is meant to occur in a person's lifetime whereby he comes to approximate in this Earthly life according to the Book of Ephesians 4:13: "...the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge (Gnosis) of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:..." This is to occur in our Earthly life, not after the death of the body which is the home of the Soul. This same Gnostic sentiment is repeated in the Book of Galatians 5:16-26: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would....Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering,**

**gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." In such a way, God that indwells humanity, finds for Himself perfect vessels for His life and expression through the Creation which was made for Him to grow and evolve Himself through mankind. This is the message of the Gnostic Paul, the message of his gospel that he took with him to Jerusalem when he visited with pillars of the Jerusalem congregation, John, Peter, and James. Since having personally received the revelation of his gospel, the Gnostic Paul was not able to derive anything from the supposed apostles of a historic Jesus as the Messiah. Hence, the Jerusalem apostles are fittingly described by the Gnostic Paul in the Book of Galatians 2:6: "But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:..." Only 14 verses later this same Gnostic Paul stated in the same Book of Galatians: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This giving of God for man, often understood as a type of allegorical death, was further understood by Gnostic Christians as the self-limitation and restriction of God to the confines and Laws of "matter" seen in the incarnation of God into the material realm, and in particular the incarnation of God in the fleshly body of mankind. Recalling that this crucifixion with God and Christ is an Astronomical and metaphysical term regrading the Sun' infusion of Comic Life and life-sustaining energy as its "falls" into all forms of "matter," this Gnostic Paul is attesting that God, and His Divine Mind, has been incarnated into not only him, but all of humanity, and consequently God, as Christ and Divine Mind, lives in and evolves Himself through humanity. As well, the Gnostic Paul is fully aware that the Cosmic God and Life Force lives not only in him, but through him. Is is God who gets to feed the poor when they are hungry through Paul and his obedience to the Torah, clothe the naked through Paul in his obedience to the Torah, visit the sick and those in prison through Paul who is obedience to the acts of kindness commanded by the Torah, dry the eyes of the suffering through Paul while carrying out loving acts of kindness as instructed by the Torah. Thus, this helps us understand why in the same Book of Galatians this same Gnostic Paul in chapter five speaks of the works of the flesh that thwarts the acts of God living in and through a man's life as well as the works of the Spirit which allows them. The uninhibited expression of God living and through mankind is not to be thwarted by man living his life in the flesh and not in the Spirit. Thus, as the writer of both Colossians and St. Paul in Galatians both knew, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, not on things on the earth..." The resurrection in which man was to participate, the resurrection of Christ, is an event that is to be experienced not after the body dies of old age, rather, it is to be experienced today as the Gnostic Paul makes so plain in the Book of Romans: 6: 3-6, 9-13: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin...Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."**

**For the Gnostic Paul, man is not to find his salvation and deliverance from a Christ or Christ Jesus external to himself; only the living Christ raised from the dead within himself. This explains why the Jerusalem apostles advocating belief in a historic Jesus, all the while looking for a literal and historical coming of a Christ/Messiah, could impart nothing to Paul. No man could impart to a Gnostic Christian which only Christ could impart within him. In spite of this Gnostic truth, efforts were almost ceaseless, first by the Petrine corrupters of Gnostic Paul's Epistles, and then later by Rome, to corrupt and adulterate through textual forgery the Pauline message in his authentic Gnostic Epistles. This explains why so much of the Pauline Epistles sound contradictory because they are. The thoughts of the Gnostic Paul and the anti-Gnostic Petrines and late Rome continually clash on the pages of the Pauline Epistles. For example, Paul is made to uncharacteristically say in the Book of Hebrews 2:3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by**

**the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;..." It is impossible for Gnostic Christians, let alone the Gnostic Paul, to hear a literal and historical Christ preach a message of salvation which never was. Again, textual forgery is to be found in I Corinthians 15: 3-9: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle,..." The Gnostic Paul, having stated categorically in his very first Epistle, the Book of Galatians 6:2, that the literalizers and historicizers in Jerusalem, the supposed pillars of the Jerusalem Church, "added nothing to me," we should then find it very troubling that this same Paul will supposedly say in I Corinthians 15:3-9 that Christ was buried and rose from the dead, was seen first by Peter (Cephas), then the 12 disciples, then by 500 people, even Peter (Cephas), then the twelve apostles, and then by the Gnostic Paul himself. Here, in Paul's authentic Epistle of I Corinthians, as a Gnostic, no less, he is falsely made to say by the forgers of his Epistles that although not a believer in a historical Christ, he as well saw this Christ Jesus risen from the dead. This story of Jesus' supposed resurrection would have to had been imparted to him by, most likely, John, Peter, or James, and of these men the Gnostic Paul has already told us that they "imparted nothing to him." Far from agreeing with such a deception, or lowering himself to such a denial of Spiritual truth, St. Paul, the Gnostic only has one thing to say in response to these forgers of his Scriptures, let alone Cephas, James, and John, as seen in 2 Corinthians 12:11: "... for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles,..."Through the agency of textual forgery of the Gnostic Epistles of St. Paul, what Roman Christianity considered heretical was attempted to be made over to such a degree that they could pass as orthodox, owing to the efforts of other men of Roman Christianity who preached "another gospel" (Galatians 1:6) and "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4) than did the Gnostic Paul. When all is said and done, the Gnostic St. Paul and the Gnostic Christians did not derive their knowledge and gospel from history, rather, the false history of Jesus Christ in the New Testament was derived from an improper alteration of the Gnosis.**

**The resurrection spoken of by the Gnostic Paul was not a resurrection of the dead body, of bones, and decayed flesh. Even though St. Paul, the Gnostic taught a Spiritual resurrection, he was not sure of his own resurrection from the dead. He constantly aspired unto it as seen in the Book of Philippians 3:11-14: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In these verses St. Paul hints at his mystical vision of which he was previously given a glimpse where he saw into the 3rd haven when he said "Not as thought I had already attained, either were already perfect." The "perfect" had achieved the resurrection from the dead in this Earthly life; Paul was well on his way, hence, he daily endeavored to "press toward the mark for the prize, being that it is the resurrection from the deadness of "matter" and Earthly life." Christhood of the Gnosis was a goal pursued ever day of his life; until then, the deadness of Earthly life awaited him. Every day St. Paul was working out his salvation. While Paul was aspiring to the resurrection from the dead in this life, his opponents were content to continue to forge his Epistles. For example, in the cyclical letter, the Book of Ephesians, who modern scholars tell us Paul did not write, but certainly a Gnostic follower of his most likely did, we have numerous interpolations. Of course, right up front in the book we find in Ephesians 1:7, we find an anti-Gnostics interpolation referring to blood of a human being being shed which is impossible for Gnostic to conceive let alone believe. The Book of Ephesians begins in 1:3 by stating that God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ has blessed mankind with all Spiritual blessings, not on Earth, but in heavenly places, and these places are "in" Christ, not apart from or externalized from Christ. This Spiritual Blessing is that the Gnostics were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the Cosmos. Notice if you will, in Ephesians 1:8 we find the key word "wisdom," which in the Greek is "Sophia," the Gnostic term for the female Christ, a term that carries the meaning of once again the Gnostic idea of knowledge, specifically the varied knowledge of things human and divine. Associated with this knowledge and wisdom is the knowledge and practice of the requisites for godly and upright living, a supreme intelligence, such as belongs to God and Christ. Here again we find the reference to the awakened Divine Mind in mankind. If we look at verse 9, we are told by this Gnostic writer that God has made known to**

**mankind the mysteries of Life: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:" The key word is mystery, which in the Greek, means "a secret " associated with by initiation into religious rites associated with secretive religious groups like Gnostics. The word "mystery" carries the idea of hidden things and religious secrets which are only confided to the initiated and not to ordinary mortals. These hidden or secret thing are not obvious to the understanding of normal people and are hidden from the ungodly and wicked but made plain to the godly. These two verses are Gnostic to their very core. However, most strangely is the anti-Gnostic interpolation in verse seven before these two Gnostic verses: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;..." Here, clearly for us to see, is a reference once again to the supposed physical body of Jesus who has shed physical blood as a supposed payment for man's sin. Modern scholars point out the incompatibility of this conflicting and contradicting anti-Gnostic verse in Ephesians 1:7 which teaches a supposed physical and historical Jesus and the two following verses of Ephesians 1: 8 and 9 which are two strong Gnostic verses that reiterate and convey two very important dogmas of Gnostic Christianity. On our hands here are are two very different and opposing theological positions that are 180 degrees opposite in intent and meaning. St. Paul, a Gnostic, as all Gnostic, did not accept the historical presentation of "the Christ" and Messiah, let alone the shedding of blood for the remission of sin, since a non-historical person to shed blood is not only an impossibility, but gross perversion of hermeneutics and interpretation of Sacred Scriptures. This perversion of Gnostic Scripture came to a head in the middle of the first century C.E. with the Petrines opposed St. Paul and caused a split and rift that has never been healed and mended, even up to this current day. Following the death of St. Paul and early into the second century C.E., Orthodox Roman Christianity continues to follow in the hermeneutical steps of the Petrines and continues to endorse a literal and historical interpretation of Scriptures, going at times so far as to resort to Scriptural forgery and interpolations like Ephesians 1:7 in order to deceiving impose its beliefs upon the ignorant masses. Other interpolations follow, like the Book of Hebrews 9:22 which states: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" as well as the Book of Colossians 1: 20 which states: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Again, for a Gnostic like St. Paul, a historical Jesus Christ cannot shed blood nor provide remission for sin. Modern scholars today tell us that such texts never came from the hand of Gnostic Christians and Gnostic texts in the New Testament, when opposed by anti-Gnostic texts, cannot have an existence in the mind of the same people. When reading the New Testament, anti-Gnostic thoughts and teachings has been falsely interpolated into the Gnostic texts and Scriptures of St. Paul. It is the job and responsibility of the truth-seeker to ascertain which of the two Scriptures when contrasted in the Pauline Epistles, are genuine Pauline texts and doctrines, before we can even begin to determine the truth regarding the nature of Jesus Christ.**

**The Book of Hebrews is known for its many anti-Gnostic interpolations. Beginning with Hebrews 5:12-13, we find a rebuke of Christians who have failed to Spiritually mature during their Earthly life: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone who uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age...." In other words, they have evolved and grown up in the Spirit and the deeper things of God. It was never God's plan that a person spend his entire life reading the Bible on a 3rd grade level; the goal is Spiritual evolution as we previously mentioned earlier in the Book of Ephesians 4:13 where a person grows into the "stature of the fullness of Christ" where he can experience the Presence and Power of God in his Earthly life. On the heels of this rebuke for Spiritual immaturity when we should have attained Spiritual maturity in our lives, we find that the same Gnostic writer states in the next verse in Hebrews 6:1-3: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit." If we stop and think about it, the "milk" of the word for which the rebuke came, is the normal religious dogmas taught in the vast majority of Christian Churches in our nation today. Name me one Church that teaches the Gnostic Christ that St. Paul taught. Name me one Christian Church that does not teach a historical Jesus Christ but the truth regarding the indwelling Christ within mankind. What I find ironic is that many of these above religious dogmas that the Gnostic Paul considered "milk" have been historically attributed to St. Paul, the Gnostic, yet,**

**here we find that the Gnostic Paul repudiated them. These first principles of Christ are like Spiritual baby food, belonging as they do, to the exoteric or superficial interpretation of Gnosis. Hence, these "first principles of Christ" are considered by the Gnostic Paul as if a deadly heresy in themselves, especially if a person focuses upon them his whole Spiritual adult life. And if we be honest, the vast majority of expressions of Christianity do just that. We are told to leave these teachings behind and move on to the deeper "strong meat" of God's Word, and not major in Spiritual "milk" our whole Earthly lives. The Gnostic Paul considers such infantile teachings as contributing to keeping people in bondage to the Petrine gospel of the fleshly Christ; a pernicious misinterpretation of the truth of "the Christ" that obscures a person from seeing the truth about the "indwelling Christ" within them. . There is no salvation of the Soul to be obtained from these Petrines that mistakenly teach a literal or historical Christ. True Salvation comes from freeing the Soul to its eternal task of Spiritual evolution, and this is only experienced through the Gnostic gospel of St. Paul and the esoteric interpretation of Sacred Scripture. Those who remained camped in a false gospel that focuses only upon an externalized literal history regarding the Christ is the "other gospel" and the "other Jesus" of which the Gnostic Paul warned in his very first Epistle of Galatians. Adoption of the false gospel of the Sarkolatoers and carnalizers of the Christ ensures that the masses will adopt a belief in the false resurrection of a dead body instead of one's Spirit. Such a false belief, only assures that a person will never go on toward Spiritual perfection, nor will he graduate from a diet of milk in his Spiritual Earthly walk. Those who accept the "Messiah" and "Christ" of the Petrines in Jerusalem who, according to the Gospel of Matthew 22:29 who "...do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God..." will never experience in this Earthly life the resurrection of the dead nor the awakening of Christ within them. If we look up the word "leaving" that is used in the Book of Hebrew 6:1 in the Thayer's Greek Lexicon, we interestingly find that it means to "depart from, as if a husband is divorcing his wife." This Greek word carries with it the ideas of "disregarding and no longer discussing something any longer." The Greek word for "leaving" goes so far as to even suggest "neglect and departure from anyone who is yet still teaching such religious dogmas to adults." In other words, we are as fully mature individuals, are to separate ourselves from such teachings and those who teach them to people who are way past time in their lives in need of "Strong Meat." This includes departing from those who teach and discuss the Earthly interpretation of the "resurrection of the dead" of a dead body in place of the teaching of the resurrection of God as Christ and Divine Mind in the Children of God. We are to cease to speak of these things elementary things in Scripture when when we reach adulthood, in its place, speak of the true resurrection Christ in mankind. The Gnostic Paul taught the resurrection "from" the dead in "this" Earthly life;" never did he teach the resurrection of dead bodies in the life hereafter. Thus, it is the physical application of these religious dogmas, instead of their Spiritual application, that have been interpolated and foisted into the Gnostic writings contained in the Book of Hebrews; doctrines that continually link a person to a supposed historical Christ instead of a Spiritual Christ as long as these dogmas are continually taught.**

**Simply put, Gnostics taught that each one knows the Lord in their own way and not all know Him alike. The "pneumatic" Gnostic Christians like St. Paul taught the indwelling Christ and denounced the misunderstanding of the Ancient Wisdom and its Christ by the Petrines like Peter, James, and John of the Jerusalem Church, were the elite few, over against the mass of "psychic" Christians, those who lacked the gnosis regarding the true nature of the Christ dwelling within them. The "pneumatic" Gnostic Christian, a term taken from the Greek word "pneuma" meaning spirit, was considered "spiritual" and were believed to have an innate openness to gnosis. The pneumatic Christians were considered the highest of the three classes of human being. These pneumatic Christians, like St. Paul, Barnabas, and others, saw themselves Spiritual, as opposed to the "pyschic" or Soul oriented regular Christians and the hylic, or material non-religious people. The Gnostics taught that only those who had been initiated into the secret oral teachings of the inner Mysteries wee capable of understanding the deeper meanings of St. Paul's Epistles. These pneumatic Christians had awakened and experienced an intimate divine self-knowledge that awakened them to a higher awareness of their indwelling divinity and purpose in this Earthly life. It was the goal of all pneumatics to focus on how they can live Spiritually in this Earthly existence with his own bodily desires and carvings. The pneumatics knew their Spirit had originated in a distant region of the Cosmos, beyond the limits of space and time. They saw themselves as an intermediary between the material world and the heavenly realm. They spent their lives seeking inner peace through prayer and meditation in order to create in this world's incessant anarchy and lawlessness, a peaceful stillness in which it became possible to hear the Spirit and Christ that lives within them, otherwise known as Divine Mind. In the safety of the Kingdom of God within them, they were able to see the unity of their true**

**being as a manifestation of this Divine Mind and Christ, and therefore accept the duality presented to them in their Earthly existence of pain and pleasure, good and evil, the material realm as well as the heavenly realm as the very essence of their Spiritual quest in this Earthly life. The pyschic Christians were believed to have some sensitivity to the divine but lack genuine gnosis. These psychic Christians were capable of receiving truth if it is mediated through symbols, doctrines, and good works. Ordinarily, Orthodox Christians fell into this group. Hence, these psychic Christians, not possessing initiation into the inner secret Mysteries, consistently made the mistake of reading the Scriptures only literally and historically. Only through a later awakening and initiation into Gnosis and the inner Mysteries, would these psychic Christians ever become equipped to read St. Paul's letters as St. Paul had intended. Only then would these former psychic Christians, now pneumatic Christians, come to the "truth" of the hidden Spiritual realities concealed in Sacred Scripture. Without this initiation into the "strong meat" of the Scriptures, these psychic Christians were relegated to spend their whole lives consuming only the "milk" of a false and erroneous understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures. Only when they awakened to the indwelling Christ within them, would the eyes of their understanding be enlightened to where they could forever see and proclaim the Christ pneumatically. Only then could they see the "Jesus Story" as well as most of the narratives of the Old Testament for what they actually are, Spiritual allegories describing the descent, incarnation, and Spiritual evolution of the Soul. Only with their person "resurrection from the dead," could they see the genius of the "Jesus Story" on a deeper level than ever before. Now, the same "Jesus Story" could no longer be accepted as read on a 3rd grade level or a supposed literal and historical story that defies common sense, for example when Jesus is said to walk on water, but now it was seen as a Spiritual myth and allegory created that was intended to be read and understood on two levels. As a child in God, the psychic Christians began to read the "Jesus Story" as a child reads nurser rhyme, but now, however, all former psychi stories were to be read on the pneumatic level. No longer are these Bible stories to be read or understood as if supposed literal and historical stories, but on the Spiritual and metaphysical level which brings forth their true and highest meaning for the Soul of mankind. No longer, when awakened from the dead, was the "Jesus Story" to be read as if about faith and ethics where Jesus dies and resurrects into eternal life on their behalf , as a promise that they too will be blessed with eternal life. Now as pneumatic initiates, these former psychic Christians can now identify with Jesus himself, the perfect initiate whose symbolic and allegorical life is the archetypal story of every Spiritual truth-seeker. No longer did people have to wonder why there is no record that a Jesus of Nazareth never existed in the first century of the Common Era, given that the term "Nazareth" is a later distortion of the term "Nazarene" along with the fact that no historical city called "Nazareth" existed in the first century of the Common Era or at the time that the Jesus myth was being put into a historical and geographical context. It begins finally to make sense when you get the truth behind Rome's invention of the "Jesus Story" as we received it from then. According to the Mandean Gnostics, the word "nazarene" means "initiate." So, the gospel myth is the story of "Jesus the initiate," the savior that rescues mankind by his example. It was by imitating the allegorical story of Jesus, the perfect initiate, mankind is led through the process of initiation until we realize Gnosis and become a Christ ourselves. Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, on pages 102-103 of their Jesus And The Lost Goddess: The Secret Teachings Of The Original Christians, that the Gnostic Paul explains that in his "'poor human flesh' he is completing the full tale of Christ's afflictions' and declares: 'I have shared Christ's crucifixion.' He reminds his students, 'The person we once were has been crucified with Christ." Simply said, the "Jesus Story" is a symbolic parable which contains within it other smaller parables that only help to enlarge the complement the basic themes of the myth. The basic underlying narrative structure onto which these small mythological subplots are attached, consist the most important aspects of the "Jesus Story;" namely, Jesus' baptism, Jesus' death, and Jesus' resurrection. These three events represent the three different levels of Gnostic initiation. These are the only narrative elements of the "Jesus Story" and myth which are important to the Gnostic Paul and are without a doubt the foundation upon which all later allegorical and pseudo-biography of Jesus was created. Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy once again sets us straight on this matter: "Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist (John the initiator) represents the psychic initiation of purification. His death represents the pneumatic initiation, in which the initiates die to the false ego-self. His resurrection represents the realization of Gnosis, in which initiates resurrect/awaken from spiritual death here in the underworld and are 'reborn' or 'unborn' into eternal life through the knowledge that their essential nature is disembodied Consciousness, symbolized by the Christ."**

**It was the hope of the pneumatic Christians that these psychic Christians would attain to gnosis in their Earthly life. The hylic or materialists, otherwise known to be fleshly human beings without any connection to the divine,**

**simply had no interest in Spiritual matters. They were accustomed to live their lives completely captive to their passions and fleshly appetites. They hylics formed the lowest of these three classes of individuals as determined by Gnostic Christianity. Thus we see, the pneumatic Christians were the elite few, over against the mass of ordinary "psychic" Christians who lacked the gnosis that would allow them to realize, as did the pneumatics, that the "Jesus Story," correctly interpreted and understood, was the story of their Soul, not the story of someone else other than themselves as Rome had tried to make it through textual forgery of the Bible's Scriptures in order to thereby assure that all the people would become parts of the Roman Catholic Church in order to be saved and escape the fires of Hell which were reserved for anyone who refused to obey Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Hence, by destroying the Gnostics and their writings, Roman Christianity was able to become the most powerful and wealthy institution in the world.**

**Put simply, many early Christians never believed that a physical Christ existed and in the earliest of centuries, the first and second century, most Christians had nothing to do with a literal and historical Jesus as "the Christ." Later, after Rome devised its new religion, especially after the second century, Christians, under Roman influence, began to claim that Jesus of Nazareth was the physical Messiah and Christ. One can easily see how a physical Jesus could be added to the later doctrines seen in what was in the beginning at least, the mystical and metaphysical gospels of the earliest Essene Christians. We tend to look upon the early Church as a neat little group within a short time period of time evolved into the tidy picture presented to us in the unhistorical Book of Acts. No problems here, and few if any conflicts in doctrine seem to be problematic in the false depiction of early Christian history in the Book of Acts. Absent from the Book of Acts, however, is any mention of the theological warfare going on between the Roman literalizers of the Ancient Wisdom with their carnalized and materialized Krst/Christ, the Petrines, and the Gnostic Christians and the followers of the Gnostic Paul with their metaphysical and mystical Christ. It took years of study before I realized that there is little factual history given in the Book of Acts. Make no mistake about it, there were many years involved with many, many differences in belief about whom Christ was and who Jesus was, so many so, that Rome will call over many centuries Church Councils after Church Councils to decide the problems surrounding Christ that continually separated their Empire and their people. If you read the Book of Acts, you come away from there thinking that Peter and Paul mended their differences the way the account is written; nothing could be further from the historical truth regarding this issue. The group that “won” the battle of doctrine regarding St. Paul's "Gnostic Christ" and Rome's "anti-Gnostic Christ" was decided at the council of Nicea under Constantine’s rule. Constantine and his delegated supporters will become the chief editors and forgers of the Biblical canon and therefore took the liberty of deciding that the make-believe person designed after Rome's theological decisions, the historical Jesus Christ, was to be the anti-Gnostic Christ of their new religion of the Age of Pisces. In spite of the Council of Nicea and its ruling, there were many believers who simply rejected an Earthly physical Jesus as the Christ. These Gnostics simply believed in a Spiritual Christ or Messiah indwelling humankind, a dogma that can be traced as far back as Ancient Egypt. It is this dogma from Ancient Egypt that was taught by the Gnostic Christians. Few Christians are aware that the root for the Messiah's names is "Mesi" in the Ancient Egyptian language. Most are familiar that the corresponding meanings of the word "Messiah" in Greek is "Christ" and in Hebrew it is "Messiach." Both of these names commonly mean "to anoint" and seldom, if ever, have we ever been given its Spiritual meaning. The name "Mesi" in Ancient Egyptian from which we obtain the later derivatives of "Christ," "Messiach," and "Messiah" actually means to be "re-birthed" or "re-born." In Ancient Egypt we find that the Egyptians named the very month in which the Inundation, otherwise known as the time when the Nile river was re-birthed, re-born, and overflowed, thus assuring a harvest that year that would "save" their people, "Mes-ore." The overflowing of the Nile river had its own Messiah, or savior of their people. The "mam-mesi" was the the re-birth place of the embalmed mummies. The evening meal on the first day of the Ancient Egyptian year was called "Mesiu," or the festival of re-birth. Almost all natural phenomena and its cyclical-nature that oscillated from death to life with Earth's seasons had their own Messiah that described the "re-birthing" of this natural phenomena. Even the serpent was called "Mesi." Hence, the "Mesi" was a Sacred Word to the Ancient Egyptians. This Serpent became a symbol for the Gnostic Messiah and the Gnostic Christ because connected to him was the concept of "re-birth" as seen when the reptile sloughted its skin and renewed itself. This explains why so often we find that the**

**Serpent is the symbol for the Gnostic Christ. Re-birth was the manifestation that accompanied the Messiah/Christ and this Cosmic and Spiritual idea, of renewed life from the dead, was often personified in the forms of various manifestors of this re-birth. Hence, the Messiah was the re-birther under various symbols that were connected in various manifestations of natural phenomena throughout the year. Besides being the re-birther of the Nile, the Messiah had a yearly re-birth in the Sun every solar year, the light of the moon through its monthly cycle, the re-birth of the dead, etc. St. Paul was fully aware, being a Gnostic, that there exist a Spirit, call it a living Conscious Energy, within all things that was alive and could reproduce itself, or could be reproduced, or re-born for the next life. This was his Christ/Messiah of the Gnosis. St. Paul's Epistles focused upon the Messianic Manifestor in a psychical or Spiritual phase, not a literal or historical phase. St. Paul's Christ/Messiah was the Revealer, according to the mysteries of St. Paul, having, as he stated in Galatians 1:11-12: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." What we must not miss in our study is that in none of these phases, as well as the human phase where the Christ indwelling mankind, could the Messiah, the Christ of the manifestation, become any one historical person. Thus, when all is said and done, the Messiah was the immortal spirit in mankind, or the Christ within, according to the Gnostic Pauls authentic Epistles. This explains why Gnostic Christians would not convert to historic Christianity nor fall for the deceptions of historic Christianity. Scholarly witness comes to confirm my evaluation as we find Celsus, a 2nd century Greek philosopher and opponent of Christianity, stated, as reproduced by Alvin Kuhn on page 198 of his Who Is This King Of Glory?: A Critical Study Of The Christos-Messiah Tradition: "Certain most impious errors are committed by them, which are due to their extreme ignorance, in which they have wandered away from the meaning of the divine enigmas." No greater error could ever be committed than mistranslations that was intended to be understood mystical and metaphysically instead literally and historically. Orthodox Christianity comes and interprets the doctrine of being born-again without the knowledge of this Gnostic re-birth and transformation of the total man and his seven lower Souls into a likeness of his Divine Self when crafting their "Messiah Story." Roman Orthodox Christianity lost the keys to the proper interpretation of the Gnostic Scriptures that they used in creating their own version of the Bible, and accordingly, most all of the Bible's narratives had by incorrect Roman Christian exegesis been given the wrong hermeneutic that ensures an incorrect beliefs associated with the Sacred Scriptures. No longer, when in possession of this information, can the Gnostic Paul be said to have ever knew the personal Christ in the flesh. The Sarkolators, literalizers, and historicizers of the Christ of St. Paul perverted St. Paul's presentation of his Mystical and Metaphysical indwelling Christ. The Gnostic Christ of St. Paul the Gnostic is the immortal Spirit in every man, not just one to the exclusion of entire humanity. This Christ of the Gnosis, of Philo and St. Paul preceded Christianity by thousands of years. Orthodox historical Christianity is but a huge interpolation and the greatest of all obstacles to the Spiritual evolution of the Souls of mankind and whole humanity. The Petrines made their fatal mistake in taking the Messiah/Christ as the mythical Messiah of the Cosmos' Time-cycles like that of the Nile, Sun, moon, etc., this Ever-Coming One, and convert this concept into a presumed historical character. Apart from the mythos and its meaning, there is no other coming, or end of time, other than that of the Age or Aeon, which is terribly mistranslated as "world" in the Gospel of Matthew, 28:20. St. Paul's Spiritual allegory deals only with the metaphorical manifestor of the Eternal in the sphere of time. For St. Paul, such a metaphorical re-birther as Christ /Messiah could never assume or be made flesh nor assume a historical personality. This is the teaching of St. Paul and his Christ, this was his gospel, a mystical gospel that was unknown to those who preached that "other gospel." Peter mistakes Pauline theology as literal realities, already confessing in 2 Peter 3:16 his inability to comprehend Paul correctly: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Thus we see that St. Paul was the natural enemy and opponent to those in Jerusalem which were creating with their own hands and a misreading of the Ancient Scriptures a Messiah and Christ made flesh for the salvation of mankind. During his whole life, the Gnostic Paul stood against the plotters and forgers in Rome why converted the mythical Christology into supposed historical Christianity. When Rome makes available their collection of the Pauline Epistles, having been forged and interpolated extensively, what occurred was the false restoration and confirmation of the carnalized Christ of the Gospels, that "other Jesus' who was repudiated by the Gnostic Paul in his own lifetime. St. Paul saw the**

**mystery of lawlessness already working in his life when others forged his Epistles. Without a doubt, Rome had a formidable task on their hands. They had to successfully blend the Christ Jesus of the earlier Gnostic Christians, Philo, and St. Paul with the literal and historical Christ in whom they ignorantly believed since they had literalized mythology instead of rendering the Ancient Scriptures allegorically as had the Gnostic Christians before them. Over time and with the emergence of the power of the Roman Christian Church, the earlier Gnostic interpretation of the Christ become a heresy. Forever will be a great gulf fixed between Gnostic Christology and Historic Christianity. Unlike the false picture of friendship between the Gnostic Paul and the Jerusalem Church, the three pillars of the Jerusalem Church and the Gnostic Paul remained unreconciled till their deaths. The great task over the earliest centuries of the Christian Church was to bridge this great separation and chasm over, or at least to conceal it from the eyes of the world in later times. This could only be done by forging, interpolating, and perverting the Epistles of the Gnostic Paul into a supposed support for Historical Roman Christianity. Only in this way were the Gnostics to find their ultimate demise and the the Roman Church was founded.**

**In spite of these efforts, as the many books and writings at the hands of Roman Christianity and their monks were slowly fused together, no matter how hard Rome worked on their Bible to expunge any and all references to Gnosticism from Marcion' First New Testament and writings, we can yet find traces of different competing and conflicting Gnostic religious dogmas and doctrines from multiple Scriptural and textual forgeries which can still be seen throughout the whole of the New Testament and apocryphal writings. These interpolations can today yet obvious, since the First New Testament by Marcion was Gnostic throughout. Marcion's First New Testament did not have interpolations in it as it would later come to possess after falling into the hands of of Roman Christian forgers and interpolators. This New Testament, taken in total by Rome and overworked for centuries, became the skeleton of sorts for Rome's later interpolations and textual forgeries as they were grafted onto the prior Essene Christian gospels and epistles which came to constitute the bulk of Marcion's canon. In short, with the the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E., the first official form of religious fundamentalism was established which would no quarter of safe haven to any alternate views or interpretation of the Scriptures other than Rome's. Rome, backed by Constantine's decree, insisted on a “legal” book to rule the physical Church and thereby force a unity among the Roman people. The other groups of remaining Gnostic Christians observed that real faith which had always been Spiritual and internal. This internal faith and "knowing" of Christ would for them remain so, no matter how many times the religious documents and Epistles of Paul were altered and forged by Rome. These forged Epistles of Paul were easy for the Gnostics to spot and never were to become authoritative to them. The same, however, cannot be said for the ignorant masses who did not possess the gnosis. Then, I ask, why are these same forged documents of Paul that exist in our Bibles today authoritative for us? It is rather simple. Nobody every told us or cared enough to find the truth about them when seeing these contradictory and conflicting passages in the Bible when reading the Pauline Epistles. It was easier to gloss over them as if they did not matter. I think that they matter, and if at all possible, I want the truth about "the Christ," not a tradition especially if it wrong!**

**This website reveals the truth behind the purposeful manipulation of history and facts in order to cover up the truth about the historical Gnostic Paul who was understood by all in the first century to be an enemy of the Jerusalem church who taught an anti-Gnostic gospel and looked for the coming of literal and historical Messiah-Christ for their salvation. If you take notice, as did the Jews, this literal or historical Messiah and the salvation of the Jews and Israel never happened. Jerusalem looked for and pinned all their hopes on the coming of a prophecy of a human being, the seed of a man and woman through normal marital relations, who would be anointed by God, and in so doing, would bring salvation to the Jewish people from the sufferings and further conquest by Gentile oppressors and invaders. Conversely, the Gnostic Paul knew that the only salvation for man was internal; the work of the indwelling and resurrected Christ in mankind. God's only true salvation promised mankind in the Scriptures, when properly interpreted, understood, and Spiritually discerned, was not one supposedly outside and external to himself. Man is a Spiritual being, and has come from outside of this Earth, and will return to his Spiritual origins outside of this Earth at the demise of his biological body. Hard as it is to realize, as our eyes slowly come to see the light among the Spiritual darkness in this Bible, it was first the**

**Jerusalem Church that taught "another gospel" that St. Paul had warned about in the first chapter of the Book of Galatians, verses 6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." On this website, I expose the true religious belief system of this anti-Gnostic Paul of Rome's forgery and interpolations as untrue, and in doing so, reveal that the New Testament depiction of the anti-Gnostic Paul is untrustworthy and not accurate to many other facts and historical truths that reveal that such a depiction of the true Gnostic St. Paul in the New Testament is we have received is deceptive, misleading, false, and fallacious. On our other website entitled The Secret Mysteries, I reveal the truth about the Gnostic Paul more in-depth than in this introduction and reveal how his Spiritual message about the indwelling Christ is a synthesis of the Ancient Wisdom, a collection of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism. At first sight, this might alarm Christians, but trust me, this is not meant to be bad news, but good news; given that such a Spiritual synthesis of divine truths not found in Orthodox Christianity, is truly the redemption and restoration of the Ancient Divine Spiritual Wisdom which had remained intact and unchanged within humanity for over 10,000 years and only with the rise of Rome would such Spiritual truth fall prey to Rome's "radical reinterpretation" and "literalization" of the Ancient Spiritual Wisdom. Along with this, I reveal how this falsified Romanized inventive imagination whereby they literalized and historicized the Gnostic Christ of the Gnostic Paul was accomplished through the agency of purposefully misused and invented Scriptures as Rome presented to the non-Jewish world their new replacement religion. I will reveal on this website how a supposed "literalized" and "historicized" Jesus became the very center of the anti-Gnostic Paul's theology, when no historical Jesus was ever to be found in the first century. It will come as a shock to both Jews and Christians when they discover that no Roman, Jewish, or Greek writer ever mentioned the historical existence of this supposed Jesus, and all claims since are seen conclusively by most modern scholars as more textual forgeries in Rome's attempts to insert into a first century timeline the historical Jesus when first century history outside the Bible never could find him. Such a vacuum for the supposed historical existence of Rome's Jesus cannot be easily explained, but needs be. And I will. This supposed historical Jesus and his story can be found, however, from start to finish, but not in Palestine or in Judea. The "Jesus Story," itself Gnostic through and through as it was taught by not only St. Paul, but is originally found to have been taught in Ancient Egypt where the "Jesus Story," or as called in Ancient Egypt the "Horus Story," is nothing more than the retelling of the metaphysics of Ancient Egypt as seen in this same "Horus Story." It is Horus, the son of Osiris, who is the Ancient Egyptian Krst/Christ long before Jesus is made to be re-birthed as the Christianized "Horus Story." Once you see for yourself that the same "sayings" of Horus which were taken thousands of years earlier from the Egyptian Book Of The Dead, are later found put into the mouth of this supposed literal and historical Jesus in the New Testament, then you will better understand why the Gnostic St. Paul could never write of a literal or historical Jesus. There never was one. This explains why he only Christ is the indwelling Presence of the Logos, the Divine Mind incarnated within mankind; a Cosmic Christ consciousness in need of awakening from the death of matter. This is the same story at taught by Ancient Egypt thousands and thousands of yeas ago. Rome will give the world "another gospel" where the first quote of Rome's 4 gospels does not show up in any Christian writing, or the presence of these 4 gospels does not first see the first light of day, until 180 C.E. This is strong stuff and not for the faint-hearted. Those who are ready to receive the deeper meaning of the Scriptures should proceed; however, if you have not grown beyond the milk and simple literal interpretations of the Bible's verses, and don't want to as psychic Christians, then this material is possibly not for you at this time in your life.**

**Knowing the truth of this matter, I am constrained to look at the typical Christian Paul in a different light from what traditional Christianity teaches today where the Gnostic Paul is never taught, and only the false Paul is taught continually from the pulpits of our Churches Sunday after Sunday. I have no "kind things" to say about the Roman lies that pass for supposed truth about Rome's Paul in the New Testament, nor should you once you come to see the truth for yourself. The Book of Proverbs states in chapter 6:16-17: "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed**

**innocent blood,..." God hates a lying tongue, especially when these lies are in the Bible that is supposed to be a revelation from God to man but, as we are seeing, so often is not. You better hold on; we must find the "real Paul" because we don't know of him, given the deception in the Scriptures and Rome's agenda bent on making sure you never find out about the true Gnostic Paul let alone the truth about the Christ that lives in you. Rome and their Catholic monks forged all of the New Testaments writings that carry Paul's name but seven, and in these seven they littered with interpolation after interpolation. The Gnostic Paul only wrote seven authentic epistles and each of these he put his name physically upon them, owning to the forgery of his letter in his day of which he was aware. So we have to be hard on this Romanized Paul and the Roman lies since Christians believe that the real Paul taught all the things that go under his name in the New Testament which have to do with a supposed literal and historical Jesus. He did not! In truth, the Gnostic Paul wrote none of these falsehoods. We will see as we study that the blame for this deception is again laid on the dishonest pens of Rome so we deal on this site as "if" this Romanized Paul was responsible for these writings since we are taught he wrote them all by Church tradition. Scrutiny of the false Pauline writings will reveal conflicts, inconsistencies, and contradictions as well as untruths after untruths. This should be all the evidence we need to see that the Paul we have heard about in our Christian experience our whole life is not the true St. Paul and what we have accepted as truthful about a historical and literal Jesus is anything but that. As said earlier, we must wait till a later website to meet the true Paul, who was a Gnostic Christian believing in the indwelling Christ only in his life. It is there we deal with the true Gnostic Paul in depth.**

**With this as a thorough background into the enigma of the 2 different St. Pauls in the New Testament, then hopefully you, here in the beginning, can see just how important it is for you to understand that in this website, in comparing the teaching contained in the New Testament concerning this monumental figure of Paul, we must make some "assumptions" right from the beginning in order to contrast the two conflicting "Pauls" of the New Testament. Scholarly study today shows us conclusively that there are two completely different Pauls that are being portrayed in the New Testament. If you will be honest with yourself, many of you have already seen and surmised as much by noticing for yourselves the many "conflicting" and "contradicting" passages assumed coming from the pen of this one Apostle Paul. Something is amiss and most of us at first just cannot figure this out or put our finger on the reason for such discrepancies in these supposed inerrant and infallible Scriptures. But with in-depth study the answers come. First we grow up believing in the traditional Paul of Christian theology and this is the Paul we have been taught our whole Christian lives. With deeper study, however, we uncover the "Gnostic Paul" which I have found in my personal study over these last 30 years, to be the more "authentic" and "historical" of the one given by Rome. But behind these two depictions of Paul we find a five century battle of conflicting "theologies" between Gnosticism and early Gnostic Christianity and a later Roman presentation of a "remanufactured Paul" whereby all "Gnostic" understandings of Paul and his original presentation of a "non-historical" Christ Jesus and the "Christ Within," have been "literalized" and "carnalized," while the truth was burned from men's minds or drowned in their blood by Roman swords. The Gnostic Paul is the one we never heard about in the New Testament or in our Churches, but yet this figure lies on the pages of our Roman New Testaments all the way through if we but recover the keys to discern his existence.**

**We have been taught our whole lives to "literalize" everything we read in the Bible, assuming that this is the normal and correct way to interpret these 2000 year old New Testament texts we read. Nothing could be further from the truth once you separate out the "Gnostic Paul" form the "literalized" and "Romanized Paul." Finally this destruction of the Gnostic Paul as well as Gnostic Christianity by the early Gentile Roman Church will win out by the 5th century and the truths of mystical Judaism as well as the truths surrounding this "Gnostic Jesus" or the "Gnostic Christ," Spiritual truths which have been taught for thousands of years previously in almost every nation, will be destroyed almost beyond recognition by Rome. To cap it all off, Rome will cover-up this deception by burning down the libraries of the world in order to hide this Ancient Wisdom that had taught the "Christ in you" is the "ONLY " Christ since the foundation of the world. In analyzing the depiction of Paul in the New Testament and his divergence, or should I say his "Roman divergence" from first Gnostic Christianity, I present the facts and evidences in the forthcoming articles on this Website for your evaluation and study. I will for the readers be scrutinizing and putting under the microscope of scholarly study the "Romanized Paul" as found in the New Testament along with his teaching of a "historical" and "literal Jesus**

**Christ." Equally scrutinized will be the Roman theology presented in this falsified anti-Gnostic Paul's name attached to Scriptures which are later forged by Rome in this anti-Gnostic Paul's name. In so doing I will show you that this Romanized presentation of Paul's supposed teaching of Jesus as the "historical Messiah" is absolutely contrary and opposite to what the "unforged" Gnostic Scriptures of St. Paul teach. I will further demonstrate beyond any doubt how the purposeful mistranslation, purposeful misquotation, and purposeful taking of the Hebrew Scriptures out of context, as well as pure "Scriptural Invention" served the purposes of a Judaism-rejecting Rome and how they put these contrary "theologies" and "religious doctrines" into the mouth of this "non-historical" anti-Gnostic Paul of their own invention. In other words the "Romanized Paul" and his "literal" and "historical Christ Jesus" is a lie and the teachings that emanate from this Romanized Paul are as well. The only hope of ever recovering the truth about the real Gnostic Paul is to become acquainted with him as the "Gnostic Paul" who only taught one "Christ;" that being the "Christ indwelling within" all mankind. This dear one is important, very important, and I strongly suggest that the reader keep this in mind because in this website I am not kind to this "Roman Paul" but on others I am very kind and redemptive of the real Gnostic Paul. The two are not the same person! It is this "Gnostic Paul" along with other Gnostic Christians that Rome will devote all its power and resources over the next five centuries of the emerging Gentile Roman Church.**

**Only in exposing the lies and deceptions in the Scriptures regarding the false Paul thoroughly, especially in light of the many years of indoctrination with error and falsehoods in the typical Christian Church, whether it be Roman Catholic or Protestant, can we ever hope of over coming our mesmerism of believing lies most of our lives and arrive at a position were we can once again be objective in learning truth. I choose to follow the path given Jeremiah the Prophet in the Hebrew Scriptures where he stated that his task, given by God, was, according to chapter 1, verse 10 to: "... root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Only by exposing the error, untruth, falsehood, fallacy, deception, dishonesty, fraud, and forgery in the Pauline Epistles, can we discern the anti-Gnostic and false Paul from the true Paul and the divine truths of his gospel. In doing these studies it is my intent that you, the reader, come to understand that both within Judaism of yesterday, as well as today, is the place God gave the "non-Jew" to find his relationship with Him, and in mystical Judaism, we find the Gnostic truths of the indwelling Christ in man. The Bible calls such people "Godfearers" and not "Christians" if I might be so blunt for the theologies for each are completely different in many regards. But you will see this as you go through this website as you see for yourself how the emerging Roman Orthodox Christian Church literally altered and changed the teachings of this authentic Gnostic Paul let alone the presentation of the mystical and metaphysical indwelling "Jesus Christ" in mankind which he taught. It would have been easier for the truth-seeker had he previously studied the Ancient Egyptian religion for it is there that we find the Spiritual and metaphysical concepts that the real Gnostic Paul taught about "the Christ." These Spiritual truths existed all the way back in Ancient Egypt some 10,000 years B.C.E. As well, and you better set down for this one, we also find the name of "Jesus Christ" in Ancient Egypt thousands of years before the rise of the Jewish nation. This feat is rather difficult, if not impossible, if Jesus Christ was a supposed literal or historical Jewish Messiah that was not to be born thousands of years later, but not so strange if this name of "Jesus Christ " had been understood in equivalent wording in the Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics as a Spiritual Concept, and not a literal or historical human being. I will let you be the judge of the results of such studies and leave to the reader to draw the necessary conclusions as we attempt to compare and separate the "real" vs "the false" Paul in the New Testament. Now let us begin such a serious study that goes to the very core of what we are taught in our Christian Faith.**

**The reader should understand that this is a very challenging website which exposes the very depth of the deception, dishonesty, and double-dealing behind the New Testament's misrepresentation of the true Gnostic Apostle Paul. Only by showing you, the reader, the conflict and disagreements existing in multiple texts and Scriptures, as well as what is untrue in the New Testament's presentation of Rome's anti-Gnostic Paul, as opposed to the real Gnostic Paul, can I promise that the eyes of the reader will be opened like never before to the fact that something is wrong and amiss with the majority of the New Testament's representation of Paul. So many times the Paul of the New Testament presents a picture of himself that does not make rational sense, or is contradictory to the historical facts of the time period in which he lived. So many times the Paul of the New Testament seem schizophrenic, being not able to say the same things the same way without contradicting**

**himself, at times on two consecutive pages of the Bible. On one page one of the Gnostic Pauls says something, then across the page, the other anti-Gnostic Paul contradicts what has just been said previously. For example, contradictions about in the New Testament, and they are not always between these conflicting Paul. St. Paul says that Abraham was justified by faith, while later in the Book of James it is said that Abraham was justified by works. Which is it? At other times St. Paul stated in Galatians 6:15: "For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is everything!" This comes from the Gnostic Paul, however the anti-Gnostic Paul later stated in Romans 3:1: "What is the advantage of the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way." This is completely different from what Paul, or the other Paul, said previously in the same book. In Romans 2:13 Paul stated: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Yet, in Romans 3:20 the other Paul stated just the opposite: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The list, if collected from all the contradicting passages of Paul in the Bible would be almost endless. Was Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, incapable of consistent thinking? Why are the Pauline Epistles in the Bible full of inconsistences? Does not God overlook his Word? Well, it does not look like it. Could we be witness to these example listed above the tension that existed between Gnostic Christianity and Orthodox Roman Christianity with their two different Pauls? We sure are. Many honest Bible scholars today have found the courage to state the obvious; namely, the dilemma of the Pauline contradictions and inconsistency between the various Pauline Scripture in the New Testament is due to the late editors and forgers of Roman Orthodox Christianity who set out to remove the Gnosticism from the Gnostic Pauls Epistles and Scriptures. The eminent Australian Bible scholar J.C. O'Neill has stated on page 47 of his The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians: "If the choice lies between supposing that Paul was confused and contradictory and supposing that his text has been commented on and enlarged, I have no hesitation in choosing the second." Now, it is time for the truth about the Paul of the New Testament that Rome gave us. Craig Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div.**

**Home**

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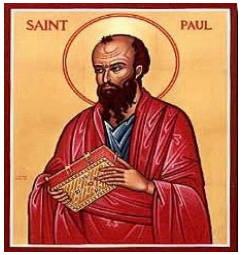
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




## THE PAUL PROBLEM: HOW MANY DIFFERENT PAULS ARE WRITING SCRIPTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? THE CONTRAST OF THE GNOSTIC PAUL (THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF CHRIST) AND THE ANTI-GNOSTIC PAUL (THE SUBVERTER OF THE GNOSTIC CHRIST AND FOUNDER OF ROMAN CHRISTIANITY)

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**In the history of Christianity, there has never been a figure as controversial as the apostle Paul. Few Christians are aware of it, but it was when reading the Pauline Epistles that Martin Luther came to an entirely new understanding of the Pauline Epistles than he ever had before. This new understanding of the Pauline Epistles led to his subsequent split from the Catholic Church and formation of the Protestant Reformation which produced a division within Christianity that exists down to our very own day. Today, it is not hard to find Churches of all types that are divided over Paul's teachings. Paul has been recognized by students of the Bible as presenting a problem within the New Testament for centuries because he dominates it. Out of 657 pages of the Greek New Testament text, 156 claim to come from St. Paul. If we add the Book of Hebrews, which was included in the canon of the New Testament because the Christian Churches in Egypt believed it was written by Paul, then over 1/4 of the New Testament is associated with Paul who was never was a disciple of Jesus where Peter, a leader in the Jerusalem Church, only is represented on fourteen pages. As well, over half of the Book of Acts is devoted to Paul. Without a doubt, the picture we receive from the New Testament is that St. Paul dominated Christianity in the first century of the Christian Era and not the Jerusalem Church as most Christians might think.**

**The study of Paul in the New Testament presents a huge problem for the New Testament believer because Paul's Epistles often do not support the picture presented of Paul in the Book of Acts. It is the Paul in the Book of Acts that most Christians are the more familiar with, however, modern Bible scholars today point out that associating the Paul of the Book of Acts with the Paul of the Epistles is not wise, given that the Paul of Acts and the Paul of his personal Epistles are not the same person. We are constantly told by modern day Bible scholars that the Paul of the Epistles, not the Paul of the Book of Acts, is the Paul to which we must look for first-hand sources for the apostle Paul if we desire to know the truth about who this person was, what he believed, and what he taught to the Churches in the first century of the Common Era.**

**Following is a detailed examination of this Paul Problem in the New Testament, but before we begin a thorough study of it, let us prepare ourselves with a summary of it in the following article created especially for that purpose. In the introductory article below, I will show the reader the different portrayals of Paul in the New Testament. Key to our study is the false presentation of Paul in the Book of Acts where Paul is made to be pro-Petrine or pro-Jerusalem Church; something that the true Paul never did nor could ever do. Let the student at all times be aware when reading the following articles that he must discern if what he is reading is the truthful Gnostic representation of Paul and his indwelling Christ or the Jerusalem's false presentation of Paul who is made to advocate a literal and historical Jesus Christ as well as hold a positive evaluation of the Jerusalem**

**Church, again something that the true Gnostic Paul never possessed or could ever possess. In so doing, such a perspective on our parts will help us in our further study as if a truth-radar of sorts to separate the truth from the fiction regarding Paul in the New Testament. Only when a student finishes this website will he be fully persuaded just how extensive the Pauline forgery is in the New Testament and how the Gnostic Christianity that Paul taught has been denigrated and falsely castigated by the Jerusalem Church as well as Rome down through the centuries when these writing that came to comprise the New Testament were written.**

**A SUMMARY OF THE PAULINE PROBLEM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

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**Sources For Your Studies That Reveals The Truth About St. Paul.**

**Historical Statements About The Apostle Paul...What Did They Know About St. Paul That We Don't?**

## THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE PAULINE PROBLEM

- Introduction To Paul And The Multiple Problems Surrounding The New Testament
- Paul's Failure To Teach Us About Jesus
- The Gospel Message Of Jesus And Paul...Do They Agree?
  - The Gospel Message of Jesus...Who Will You Believe For Eternal Life...Jesus Or Paul?
  - The Gospel Message of Paul...Who Will You Believe For Eternal Life...Paul or Jesus?
- Why The Christian Should Bother Himself With The Jesus-Paul Problem And The Importance Of The Issue
- The Nature Of The Christian Faith: Historical Or Mythical?
- Does Paul's De-Emphasis Upon The Human Jesus Affect The Writers Of The Other Gospels?
- Solving The Jesus-Paul Problem...Can It Be Done?

## THE PICTURE OF PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: HAVE WE BEEN TAUGHT THE TRUTH?

- The Picture Of Paul In The New Testament...Have We Been Taught The Truth?
- The Problem Of Paul In The New Testament...But You Never Knew That There Was A Problem...Did You?
- Can Knowledge Of The Pharisees, Gamaliel, Stephen, And Paul's Pre-Christian Life Help Us Find The Truth?
- The Purposeful Misrepresentation Of The Pharisees In The New Testament To Cloud The Pauline Problem
- Paul As A Pharisee?...Too Many Inconsistencies To Be A Pharisee
- The Re-Editing Of The New Testament To Cover Up The Pauline Problem
- The Book Of Acts And The Account Of Stephen...Trying Again To Cover Up The Truth About Paul
- The Artificial Creation Of Judaism's Rejection Of Jesus And Jesus' Rejection Of Biblical Judaism
- Paul's Relationship With The High Priest Proves Paul Was A Sadducee And Not A Pharisee
- The Non-Jewish Ideas Of Paul---A Pharisee of Pharisees...How Can This Be?
- Understanding The Damascus Road Experience Of Paul And His Spiritual Dilemma
- The Aftermath Of Paul's Damascus Road Experience...A New Religion
- The Necessary Role Of The Eucharist...In Paul's New Religion
- Does The Account Of The Jerusalem Church In The Book Of Acts Discount Paul's "Gospel" And Theology?
- Paul And His Master Plan For Reaching The Gentiles And Gaining Recognition Which The Jerusalem Church Never Gave Him
- Controversy At The Jerusalem Council? Law Or Grace? Or Both?
- The Tubigen School...Noticing The James/Peter...vs...The Pauline Split
  - Paul's Split With The Jerusalem Church And The New Testament's Attempt To Cover It Up...###1
  - Paul's Split With The Jerusalem Church And The New Testament's Attempt To Cover It Up...###2
  - Infighting Between Paul And James And Peter
- The Beginning Of Paul's Woes...The Challenge From The Messianic Christian Jews & Paul's Subsequent Trials
- The Ebionites And Their Testimony Concerning The Truth About Paul
- The Ebionites And What They Should Mean To The Christian
- Paul's Gospel: A Synthesis Of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, And Judaism
- Paul's Anti-Law Bias...Revealed In Detail
- Paul's Denigration Of The Jews
- The Inconsistency In Paul's Writings Toward The Jews: Tolerance To Bigotry, From Love To Hate

- The Book Of Acts And Paul's Activities
- Paul...He Was Opposed By The Nazarenes & The Jerusalem Church...This Should Trouble Us!

## THE NEW TESTAMENT'S DEPICTION OF PAUL...THE TRUTH ROME HOPED YOU'D NEVER LEARN

- Paul's Conversion In The New Testament...Is It Trustworthy...Or Should We Be Suspicious?
- How To Make Sure You Are Not Misled When You Read The Pauline Epistles
- Have We Followed The Wrong Gospel? The Hidden Battle Between Peter, James, John And Paul
- Hidden Conflict In The New Testament
- The Problem Of Paul In New Testament Studies
- Did Paul Betray Jesus' And His Message?
- When Paul's Teachings Conflict With Jesus...Who Are We To Believe?
- Paul-Odd Man Out At The Jerusalem Council
- Seeing Paul For What He Really Was...The Gnostic Adversary To The Jerusalem Church
- The Law According To Paul...How Can We Believe Him?
- Danger Of Accepting Paul's View Of The Law
- Does Paul Have Double Vision When It Comes To The Law?
- Did Paul Continue To Bring Blood Sacrifices After The Cross Of Jesus?
- In Spite Of Paul's Favorite Portrayal In The New Testament...Was He Still An Enemy Of The Jerusalem Church?
- The Letter To The Hebrews: An Attempt To Prevent The Gentile Exodus From Pauline Christianity To Mosaic Faith
- Paul And The Nazarenes...Why Do Their Messages Conflict When They Both Supposedly Believed In A Historical Jesus?
- Paul And The Roman Creation Of A New Religion For The Gentiles

## INVESTIGATING THE ORIGIN AND SYNTHESIS OF PAUL'S UNIQUE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Investigating The Origin And Synthesis [Gnosticism, Pagan Mystery Religions, Judaism] Of Paul's Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament...Introduction

- Article no 1...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 2...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 3...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 4...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 5...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 6...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 7...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament
- Article no 8...Investigating The Origin And Synthesis Of Paul's Unique Doctrine Of Salvation In The New Testament

## PAUL'S BLATANT AND PURPOSEFUL MISUSE OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES IN HIS WRITINGS

Eight Rules For Correct Interpretation Of Our Bibles

PaRDeS....The 4 Levels Of Jewish Understanding Of The Scriptures

- What Is This Law That Paul Rejected?
- Mysteries Surrounding Paul's Gospel And His View Of The Law
- The Relationship Between The Torah And Salvation As Taught In The Jewish Scriptures
- Paul And The Judaizers: Paul's Attempts To Thwart The Teachings Of The Jerusalem Church
- Looking At How Paul Misused The Jewish Old Testament In His Writings
- Does Paul Change The Faith Of Jesus Into A Faith About Jesus? You Will Have To Decide For Yourself
- The Law According To Paul...Can We Believe Him?
- Paul's Misrepresentation Of The Jews As God's Chosen People
- Paul's Inconsistent Teachings On Circumcision

---

**Paul's Conflicting Ideas On The Law...What Gives?**

- Paul's Views On The Law As Contrasted With Moses' And The Prophets'
- Faith And Works...Does Paul Misrepresent It In The New Testament?
- Paul Would Have Us Believe Grace Is "Mysteriously" Somehow Exclusive Of Good Works...Is It?
- Grace As God's Unmerited Favor...Or Is It Merited After All....And Again Have We Been Misled By Paul?
- The Anti-Judaism Of Paul...Strange For A Pharisee Of Pharisees...Don't You Think?
- Paul Misquotes The Prophets And Misinterprets The Cornerstone...You Have Got To Be Kidding?
- Does God Want You To Obey His Torah Or Paul For Salvation?
- Does Paul Have The Right To Say That Those Who Don't Accept His "Variant" Gospel Are No Longer The Israel Of God?
- Is God's Wisdom Available To All Or Only To Those Who Accept His "Variant" Gospel?
- How Could Paul Be So Wrong In Saying Hanging A Corpse On A Tree Is A Curse On The Dead Instead Of The Living?
- Does Paul Try To Make Us Believe That Abraham Alluded To Jesus When He Didn't?
- Faith Or Deeds? Did Paul Misrepresent Abraham And David In His Writings...And What Are We To Believe?
- Did Paul Misapply The Text Of Isaiah To Maliciously Accuse The Jews Of Blaspheming The Name Of God...When They Had Not?
- Does Paul Slant The Truth To Make It Look Like His Pauline Christianity Has Replaced The Religion Of Moses And Jesus?
- Romans Chapters 9-11: The Crucial Chapters Of New Testament Anti-semitism And Replacement Religion
- Does Paul Take Out Of Context The Psalms To Make His Point...Even If The Original Author Of The Psalms Intended No Such Meaning?
- Did The Writers Of Gal. 3:5-6 Take The Quote Of Abraham And Faith From Gen. 15:6 Completely Out Of Context?
- "In Thee Shall All The Nations Be Blessed"...What Does This Really Mean?
- Galatians 3:10 And The Purposeful Misquote Of Deut. 27:26
- Galatians 3:11...No Man Is Justified By Obedience To The Law In The Sight Of God...Or Is He?
- Habbakuk 2:4...The Just Shall Live By Faith And The Misuse Of The Text In Galatians 3:11
- Galatians 3:13...How Could Paul Be So Wrong In Teaching That The Hanging Of A Corpse On A Tree Is A Curse Upon The "Dead" Instead Of The "Living"?
- The Changing Of The Tenses Of "Seed" From The Plural To The Singular And The Misapplication Of Gen. 13:15 And Gen. 25:7 In Galatians 3:16
- Galatians 3:19 States That "The Law Was Ordained By Angels" Or Was It?
- Galatians 3:19 States That The Law Was Given Because Of Transgressions...Was It #1?
  - Galatians 3:19 States That The Law Was Given Because Of Transgressions...Was It #2?
- Isa. 54:1 & Sarah And Hagar...Paul's Attempt To Teach With Rabbinic Methods...Gone Completely Awry!
- "In Thee Shall All The Nations Be Blessed"...Does This Refer To Jesus As Paul Would Have Us Believe?
- Pauls Misuse Of Psalms 8:5-7 in Hebrews 2:6-8
- Paul Would Have You Believe That Gentiles Who Accept His Unique Gospel Are Now The "New Israel"...How Absurd Paul!
- Can Paul Misquote Habakkuk And Get Away With It? Well He Has!
- In Adam All Died...Or Did They?...And Paul's Misquote Of Deut. 30:14
- Did The New Testament Writers Deceptively Picture Biblical Judaism As A Religion Without Love?

Summary And Conclusion To Paul's Blatant And Purposeful Misuse Of The Hebrew Scriptures In His Writings

# THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH...PAUL'S ATTEMPT TO COVER UP HIS VIOLATION OF THE ACTS 15 COUNCIL AND HOW HE WAS LEADING HIS CHURCHES INTO SIN AND IDOLATRY

- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #1?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #2?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #3?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #4?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #5?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #6?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #7?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #8?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #9?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #10?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #11?
- Paul's Rebuke Of Peter....Have We Misunderstood What Really Happened At The Antioch Incident #12?

# CONTRASTNG THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS AGAINST THE TEACHINGS OF PAUL...WHY DOES PAUL DISAGREE WITH JESUS' MESSAGE AND GOSPEL?

- Contrasting The Gospel Message Of Paul Vs The Gospel Of Jesus No.1
- Contrasting The Gospel Message Of Paul Vs The Gospel Of Jesus No.2
- Contrasting The Gospel Message Of Paul Vs The Gospel Of Jesus No.3
- Contrasting The Gospel Message Of Paul Vs The Gospel Of Jesus No.4

As we conclude the study of apostolic theology, the words of Rabbi Solomon Schechter come to mind: "One thing is quite clear even to every student, and this is that a curious alternative is always haunting our exegesis of the Epistles. Either the theology of the Rabbis must be wrong, its conception of God debasing, its leading motives materialistic and coarse, its teachings lacking in enthusiasm and spirituality, or the Apostle to the Gentiles is quite unintelligible."

# FURTHER STUDIES INTO THE PAUL PROBLEM.....ISOLATED DOCTRINES OF PAUL UNDER THE MICROSCOPE OF THE TORAH

- Paul And His Heretical Views On Authority....Was He A Sexist?
- Paul And His Views Of Jewish Christians...What Would Jesus Think Of This?
- Infighting Between Paul And Peter, James, and John: The Petrine And Pauline Split
- Paul's Denigration Of The Jews In The Pauline Letters
- Who Is The Real Paul...A Man Of Tolerance Or Bigotry?

# LOOKING AT PAUL'S INFLUENCE UPON THE LATER WRITERS OF THE GOSPELS AND THE BOOK OF ACTS

- The View Of The Jew In The Gospels And The Book Of Acts
- Who Were The Evangelists And Why Did They Write What They Did?
- Have We Believed In "Another Jesus" And "Another Gospel" And Not Known It?
  - Jesus The Jew
  - The New Testament And It's Portrait Of A Non-Jewish Jesus

# THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD BOOK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

- Have We Completely Misunderstood Paul's Message In The Book Of Galatians No.1?
- Have We Completely Misunderstood Paul's Message In The Book Of Galatians No.2?
- Have We Completely Misunderstood Paul's Message In The Book Of Galatians No.3?
- Have We Completely Misunderstood Paul's Message In The Book Of Galatians No.4?

Home

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH

### WEBSITES FOR YOUR STUDY THAT WILL BRING YOU TO "THE TRUTH" ABOUT "THE CHRIST," "THE JEWISH MESSIAH," AND THE "JESUS STORY"

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**The Websites and the intended path for our Spiritual pilgrimage follow, but I must say that what I uncovered when getting to the bottom of the origin of the "Jesus Story" is that the "New Testament Jesus" can be understood in many different ways and in so doing yet communicate progressive Divine Truth to the truth-seeker. I have discovered through my 20 years of study that we basically have 3 different ways to understand and interpret "the Christ" and the "Jesus Story" as I and other scholars see it. Let it be understood up front that our "Jesus Story" is not "new;" it existed from the beginning of recorded time as found in a host of other nations and other "religions" where this personified central character, often termed "the Krst" or "the Christ," is found to be identified by a host of other names in these different religious expressions from nation to nation. This fact alone, that the same or similar "Jesus Story" is found as far back as Ancient Egypt some 5,000 to 10,000 years B.C.E, should make us immediately aware that something lies behind our "Jesus Story" other than a supposed "literal" and "historical" person. We at Bet Emet Ministries have covered all 3 different understandings and presentations of this "Krst" or "Christ" which is termed "Jesus Christ" in Christianity and the presentation of our research is distributed throughout the totality of our websites. Taken and studied in order, our sixteen Websites take the student through these 3 different understanding of "the Christ" in systematic order where we progress from our inherited purported "literal-historical" approach to the "Jesus Story" and the "Christ Story," to the deeper understanding of "the Christ" when we end up with the ancient "Mystical," "Mythological," and finally the "Metaphysical" understanding of "the Christ" as taught by the Ancient Spiritual Masters down through recorded history until the 2nd century and the rise of Roman Catholic Orthodoxy. The following facts and evidence we share with the truth-seeker and these facts and evidence can be found by any one who dedicated himself or herself to do the exhaustive studies into this area of Spiritual study:**

- **Historically...(Divine Spiritual allegories and myths were taught through the medium of a personified and presumed historical person; although not accurate to the existence of a literal or historical person. Such teachings, however, were yet very important in that it serves as an example to mankind to be emulated and followed by all mankind in one's Earthly existence).**
- **Mythically...(The personification of the Sun, owing to the fact that the Sun was understood by the ancients to be the the visible representation of the Cosmic Divine Conscious & Intelligent Energy and Divine Mind of the Creator, and its path through the Zodiac and the 4 seasons of the solar year (equinoxes and solstices), served as the vehicle to depict and personify the growth and Spiritual maturation and evoluation of the Soul and Divine Mind in "matter," i.e., humanity).**
- **Mystically/Metaphyscally...(The expression of the hidden and veiled teaching of the Spiritual realm. This is the secret doctrine, otherwise called Soul Science, that was shared and given under strict and**

**exacting conditions to approved candidates by the Masters of Wisdom regarding the descent of the Logos and Divine Mind of God into matter, ie., again mankind). Paul speaks of this:**

***Col 1:27 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Are all three methods of presenting "the Krst," "the Christ," or as we have come to know of it as "Jesus Christ," equally accurate to truth? No, they are not and our Websites will provide the evidence you need as a truth-seeker to not only see this for yourself beyond any doubt, but make adjustments in your religious belief system when needed based upon the facts and evidence that our Websites provide. Our focus and Spiritual goal needs to be on correctly interpreting "the Krst" and "the Christ;" in other words, as we Spiritually grow in our Earthly incarnation, we are intended to Spirutally grow and evolve as we both learn and come to experience in our Earthly life both the Mystical and Metaphysical Christ with us whereby we experience and demonastrate the resurrected Presence and Power of God through our lives. Hence, being equipped with this understanding, we can then and only then, adequately deal with and understand what lies behind the erroneously interpreted "Historicity of the Christ" as seen in our inherited "Jesus Story" given the world by Rome which is portrayed and interpreted to us as a supposed person of historical being, the Christ with flesh which is limited to but one person to the exclusion of the whole of mankind. To this grievious error of interpretation of the divnity hidden within mankind, St. Paul responds:**

***2 Cor 13:5 5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (KJV)***

**It goes without saying that we all begin to read and study the Bible from a "literal" perspective assuming that a literal and historical understanding of the "Jesus Story" is the intended vehicle for receiving "literal truth" about Jesus Christ, never realizing that these ancient stories found in the Bible and the "Jesus Story" were written as long ago as Ancient Egypt and only later incorporated into the Bible. What we don't know is that these ancinet Spiritual myths and stories were never understood by the Ancient in a literal or historical manner or fashion as we have been erroneously taught to receive and believe in them. These ancient "Krst/Christ Stories" were intended to be understood by the writers of this ancient Spiritual Mysteries only as Spiritual Allegories depicting the fall, incarnation, Spiritual growth, and eventual ascension of the Soul in "matter" by the original writers of these Spiritual myths and never were they ever intended to be understood as if a "literal" or "historical" story of anyone other than yourself! The Christ of God dwells only within us; never apart from us. Only with the rise of Roman Catholic Orthodoxy will the God incarnated within every child of God be ripped from his bosom and make to appear external to mankind. That is why we find upon study that our "Jesus Story" is repeated in identical form from beginning to end all the way back to pre-dynastic Egypt over 13,000 years ago. This "Christ Story" was never intended to be understood as if "limited" to but one person as Rome has fashioned it with their purposeful corruption of the Hebrew Scriptures, but belongs to the whole of the human race. The "Jesus Story," correctly interpreted is the story of the incarnation of God in mankind where God, or Divine Mind and Consciousness, has descended into "matter," the whole of humanity, and the whole of mankind has become the Temple of the Holy Spirit and Divine Mind that fashioned the whole of the Cosmos. It is this hidden mystery, Divine Mind incarnated into all "matter" that only finds its Self-expression in all manifestations of "matter," especially humanity, that is lost in our current understanding of "the Jesus Story" we have inherited today. Not aware that you are the "evolving Christ" yourself, we mistakenly spend our entire lives looking outside of ourselves from God when all along we have been told but find it hard to believe that the Kingdom of God is within us. Notice, if you will, we are told not to believe that God only lives outside of us or that the Christ is external to us as we find in the Gospel of Luke 17:21 21:**

***Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (KJV)***

**Bet Emet Ministries began several years ago to present websites dealing with Christianity, and is so doing, we adopted our inherited "Literal Interpretation" of Jesus in the "Jesus Story" since the "literal" approach toward Jesus in the New Testament is taught today by almost all of Christianity as they *assume* that Jesus**

**Christ was a historical person. We all grow up in the Western Hemisphere assuming that the "Jesus Story" is a historical reality; that is, until we do serious study of our Christian faith which is required to get to the bottom of this "Jesus Story" and the religious synthesis hidden within it. Only when our studies into the truth behind our New Testament progress to where we uncover the First Gnostic New Testament which was later corrupted by Rome with its Second New Testament, will we see when studying the early expression of Gnostic Christianity that "the Krst" and "the Christ" (the Divine Mind of the Creator in all "matter") will we come to clearly see the Mystical Christ and Mythological Christ for what it truly is and was once understood by all Christians to be before the rise of Roman Catholic Orthodoxy. Many of our websites, especially the early ones from years ago, begin by approaching the "Jesus Story" from this inherited historical-grammatical method of interpretation because this is how we grow up and first get acquainted with the "Jesus Story". Only by submitting this "historical Christ" under the microscope of intense scrutiny can we be certain that the inherent problems in this literal and historical interpretation of "the Christ" and the "Jesus Story" is a falsehood and erroneous. Only in this way, by revealing what is not true, can we then come to find what is true and then, and only then, know within ourselves that we must look elsewhere than a literal or historical interpreation of the "Jesus Story" for its true meaning and find the "Mystical," "Mythological," and "Metaphysical" divine truths behind all the "Christ Stories" which remained intact for thousands of years until the 2nd century where we find Rome "radically reinterpreting" the whole of the "Christ Stories" and "limiting" this Christ to but one person, the access to which only comes through the doors of the Roman Church. Oh, how convenient for world domination and the manipulation of humanity through fear and ignorance to withold the truth of man's evovling Spiritual divinity from him as Rome radically reinterpreted, altered, corrupted, and changed the whole of the Sacred Mysteries and Ancient Wisdom that had remained intact and unchanged for tens of thousands of years. These "divine truths"regarding the Soul of mankind I felt were necessary to get to the readers, students, and truth-seekers in order to reveal the greater Spiritual Truths that lay within Biblical and Mystical Judaism that are not taught by mainline Gentile Christianity today which remains now, going on two thousand years, stuck in the muck of a false literal and historical interpretation of pure Spiritual Mysticism and Metaphysics. As a pastor I realized that it takes time for a "seed to grow" and if I strike out and were to say "almost everything you believe about the 'Jesus Story' is wrong," I would lose any hope of reaching people with the fruits of my studies and the divine truths and Soul Science kept from them by Rome. We must understand our "Jesus Storey" correctly; that is what all incarnational life is meant to accomplish whereby one "awakens" to his True Divine Self; that he is the expression of Divinity and Divine Mind as a human being. We sing "in Him we live, move and have our being;" but more correctly it should be sung that "in 'us' God moves, lives, and has His being" and it is this agency of the indwelling Christ in all, no longer limited to but one person, that needs to be shared with all. This Spiritual truth kept from us needs to be restored to humanity so that man can come to the realization that he is ONE with God and always has been and in so doing, then all world religions can now turn their swords into plowshares because we are all ONE, a brotherhood of the whole of mankind, all created in the image of God our Father. So we begin with the study of the Jewish Roots of Christianity by following the the Rabbinical Methods of teaching and I applied them to Bet Emet's presentation of the "Jesus Story" which we find evolves to different levels of understanding and interpretation over the totality of our Websites. Presented for our understanding of the "Jesus Story" will be the 4 levels of Rabbinical teaching regarding the proper interpretation of all Scripture. Let us learn them now as we return "to the Faith once given the Saints" where Christ was the possession of the whole of mankind, not one solitary person to the exclusion of the whole of humanity.**

## PASHAT

**The first level of understanding is PASHAT (simple interpretation). The Pashat is the "literal" meaning. It is similar to what Protestant hermeneutics calls "Grammatical Historical Exegesis" and also similar to what Protestant Hermeneutics calls "The Literal Principle." The PASHAT is the plain, simple meaning of the text; understanding Scripture in its natural, normal sense using the customary meanings of the words being used, in accordance with the primary exegetical rule in the Talmud that no passage loses its PASHAT (b.Shab. 63a; b.Yeb. 24a). While there is figurative language (like Ps. 36:7), symbolism (like Rom. 5:14), allegory (like Gal. 4:19-31), and hidden meanings (like Rev. 13:18; 1Cor. 2:7) in the Scriptures, the first thing to look for is the**

**literal meaning or PASHAT. This is how and why I developed the first websites and, in so doing ,try to reveal the beauty of Biblical Judaism to the Christian student desiring the truth of his Jewish Roots. For it is in Biblical Judaism do we find our links with ancient Egypt in their purest form thus preserving better than any nation these Ancient understandings of God, Divine Mind, and the Cosmos and man's responsibilities to the Creator. Hence, these beginning websites approaches "the Christ" and the "Jesus Story" assuming that they reflect accurately the events of an assumed "historical person." In so doing, we will compare these stories with their counterparts existing seveal thousands of years earlier, we will compare the "sayings" of Jesus with those of the Sun-gods thousands of yeas ago as far back as Ancient Egypt, we will come to see that historically much of these stories and narratives in the Bible and the New Testament are simply not accurate to factual history, archaeological findings as well as Egytology. We will slowy come by noting these conflicts and contraditions that the literal and historical telling of the "Jesus Story" is "milk" at best for babies to get their "feet wet" in the Spirit realm, but definately this is not the strong meat that we are told to desire in the Word of God. As well, the reader will have revealed to him slowly that that behind this motif of a supposed literal and historical Jesus lies the greatest deception known to mankind, given that Scriptural forgery and purposeful misquotation, mistranslation, and pure invention of Hebrew Scriptures out of thin air expose the "Jesus Story" as a historical hoax. We will see this deception emerge as we try to verify what our Roman Bibles say on its pages when compared with the Hebrew Scriptures from which these New Testament Scriptures were said to be supposedly taken. The reader will become the judge if these New Tetament is a faithful translation of the Hebrew Scriptures or not. Only by seeing the host of problems that emerge doing such comparisons of Christian dogmas and doctrines with the Jewish dogmas and doctrines as well as the Hebrew Scriptures from which our Bibles inaccurately quotes and purposefully mistranslate, will the door on enlightenment concerning the "Jesus Story" slowly "crack open" and reveal to the truth-seeker that man irreconcilable problems and falsehoods that lie behind a "literal" and "historical" interpretation of our inherited "Jesus Story." This needs be said up front, for until we see these problems and falsehoods for ourselves, then moving to a deeper understanding and a more true understanding of "the Christ Story" and our "Jesus Story" has no purpose since being taught since childhood that our Bibles and Christian faith is "infallible, inerrant, and inspired." Seeing that they are not, should make you want the truth about God, man, and Soul more than ever, now being convinced that you don't have the truth as you once thought and were told. I will let the evidences and facts which I bring to the reader's attention determine if a literal and historical approach to Christianity and the "Jesus story" is warranted and if what the New Testament affirms can be proven to be truthful and trustworthy in light of modern scholarship.**

- **RETURNING TO THE BIBLICAL FAITH...EXAMINING CLOSELY OUR BIBLES**
- **http://www.christianjewishbible.netfirms.com**
- **(We begin our study by looking at our New Testaments since it is within this New Testament given us by Rome that we have the core of the problems concerning this Jewish Messiah portrayed as Jesus. Here we encounter, maybe for the first time for many readers, a host of unlimited examples of textual and Scriptural falsifications in our Christian Bibles when compared with the prior Hebrew Scriptures which lie in stealth in both the Greek and later English mistranslationsof our Christian Old and New Testaments. Hundreds of examples exist where the facts and Scriptural truths that exist in the Jewish Masoretic Old Testament texts are shown to be purposefully changed in the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures by the Essenes and later incorporated into almost all Christian Old Testaments. Not to be outdone, Rome later emerges and continues the Scriptural falsification on a much larger scale by changing and altering the Hebrew Scriptures and eventually adapting its "literalized" solar-mythology" in their final production, the Second New Testament. Here we encounter the change of these ancient Divine Spiritual Mystical, Mythological, and Metaphysical Concepts as they become altered almost beyond recognition and reinterpreted and attached to the life of the "supposed literal and historical" New Testament Jesus. No longer are the Sacred Scriptures interpred mystically and metaphysically as they were for thousands of years. With the emergence of Rome, what was mystical and metaphysical dealing entirely with the Spiritual realm is not between the 2nd and 5th century rendered literally and historically. The stories and events connced to the Spiritual and divine realm of the Soul and Spirit, along with the "Mystical Divine Truths" of a "Metaphysical Realm," become with the emergence of Roman**

**Christianity "literalized," "historicized," and "limited" to but one supposed person of supposed history. A person can only now trace the adulteration of the Scriptural Texts and the forgery of the Hebrew Scriptures back down through history in order to determine when the theolgoical train jumed the track so to speak. Thus, it becmes necessary that we become very familiar with the document called the New Testament which has incorporated such a religious agenda of literalizing and historicizing what once was only Mystical and Metaphysical and in so doing, Rome succeeded in creating a "replacement religion" over these last 1,800 years. These studies are our "introduction" to the "Jesus Problem" which can be laid basically at the feet of Rome and their "antisemitism."**

- **RETURNING TO THE JEWISH ROOTS OF CHRISTIANITY**
- **http://returntofaithofjesus.netfirms.com**
- **(The examination of the Jewish and Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith as taken from a literal perspective. In so doing we expose many of the errors in doctrine and practice of today's Gentile Christianity with special emphasis upon the non-Jewish believer and his Divine place within the Israel of God instead of enmeshed in "replacement religion" as exists today in Gentile Christianity. We pay no attention in this site to the many problems concerning the Historical Jesus and approach the study from the normal assumption that the historical Jesus is true since that is how most of us grew up believing in the first place. In later sites we look at this problem in greater detail but to stress the greatness of Divine Truth as found yet in Judaism today as well as over the last 2,000 years we compare basically "Roman Christianity and its dogmas with the dogmas of Judaism and all the while keep our eyes on the alteration of the Hebrew Scriptures which changed the ancient Divine Spiritual Wisdom as found in ancient Egypt and their later children the Jewish nation).**

- **THE COVENANT OF NOAH & THE LAWS OF NOAH AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
- **http://covenantofnoah.netfirms.com**
- **(Now we look in depth to the non-Jewish believer and how he fits into true Biblical Faith without conversion to Judaism. This is very important information and necessary for every Christian to read and study in detail. This is a very revealing study of the Covenants of God with special emphasis upon the Covenants concerning the non-Jew which are called today the Covenant of Noah comprising the 66 commandments of Noah. Included in this site are Old Testament references to this covenant as well and revealing exposition of this same covenant in the New Testament as taught to the non-Jews in fulfillment of the Great Commission before Rome would change everything in the 2nd through the 5th century. It is here we begin to see the "pattern;" the "Pattern of Worship" which we find is the same for the Jew and non-Jew and how denominational Christianity has missed the mark throughout history due to it's antisemitic background and antisemitic dogmas and Scriptural forgeries inherited by Rome. Make no mistake about it, obedience to basic morality and decency as taught by the two Tablets of the Law, prepares the individual for the awakeing of the divine and indwelling Christ within him. Hence, the importance of the Laws of Noah as well as Isaiah chapter 56 when the non-Jew "gets" to go beyond the minimum mitzvoth connected to the Laws of Noah).**

- **THE BIBLICAL "PATTERN" OF WORSHIP & THE GENTILE GOD-FEARER IN THE FIRST CENTURY SYNAGOGUE-"CHURCH"**
- **http://jewishrootscx.netfirms.com/**
- **(Having learned all of this knowledge from the above websites and fully convinced that repentance is needed in our "Christian religious belief system" then the question that should be asked is this one as I see it: *"If I, as a non-Jew, who had not converted to Judaism, had lived in the first century in Israel and had come into contact with the Messianic Movement within Israel as we find it in Acts 15 for example, then what would I have been taught about how a non-Jew is to "worship" the Creator"? Is there a "Pattern of Worship" of God that I need to know about?* Other questions come to mind: What was I to do having learned these truths about the early Gentile inclusion into the Israel of God? How was I to worship in contrast as to how I learned from Roman Christianity? How can I bring this understanding into my life today? How can I worship the Creator in "Spirit and in Truth" in**

**light of what I have learned in the above websites that has shown me that I have been badly taught and so badly misquided by my Spiritual leaders in Christianity today? What lies behind these "Jewish and cultural" expression of Worship of God as seen in the Biblical Festivals as well as the Equinoxes and Solstices? Is there a "Comic Pattern" of worship that is reflected in the Jewish Nation and their Jewish and cultural worship of God? Is there something bigger out there that I fail to see being limited by only the "Jewish expression" of the worship of God? Do I begin with a through study of Judaism and advance to a deeper understanding of the God of the Cosmos? Is the Macrocosm reflected in the Microcosm of Jewish worship? Yes, yes, yes! But all of that must come later. We must get our feet on the ground of Scriptural integrity and learn these "basic principles" and the truth about our New Testament and our corrupted "Jesus Story" before we move into much "deeper waters" and the hidden Divine Truths behind our "Jesus Story". If you want those answers then these forthcoming websites are for you. Now having mastered the above sites we move on to these "deeper Spiritual waters" that Rome never intended you know!).**

- **AN UNBIASED LOOK INTO THE HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT…AND THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ITS CANONIZATION?**
- **http://historyofformationofnewtestament.netfirms.com**
- **(Now we must understand how we actually got this New Testament in the first place with all of its purposeful mistranslation, misquotations, and Scriptural inventions. This study is as best as possible an unbiased and intense study into the New Testament, its origins, its canonization, the disagreements of the early Church Fathers as seen for hundreds of years in the many conflicts and disagreements concerning it; its falsification and purposeful mistranslation of the Jewish Masoretic text, the role of the Essenes in the falsification of the Jewish Old Testament and its impact of the later developing Roman New Testament, and the determination of the role of the Holy Spirit in the production of the New Testament...if any)**

## REMEZ

**The next level of understanding of the Scriptures taught by the Rabbis is called in Hebrew REMEZ (hinting at a prior truth or a hidden truth that goes beyond the current text). Peculiarities and contradictions in the Biblical texts are treated and presented to the reader as hinting at a deeper Divine and Spiritual truth than that conveyed by its PASHAT. The fun of discovering our Jewish Roots, Sabbaths, and Biblical Festivals, all of which have hidden Mystical and Metapysical meanings connected to the incarnation of the Soul and its Spiritual evolution on Earth, is over and iwe now move on to the deeper Mystical and Metaphysical teachings to come. Now it is time for serious investigation of our inherited faith. Our Websites get more challenging as I begin using the principle of Remez to hint that there are problems with the "Jesus Story" beyond the Pashat "interpretation" and begin to question many of the teachings of Christianity and their presentation of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. We still approach these issues as if "historical" but as your studies progress you begin to slowly get the picture that there is severe problems with what Christianity teaches about "the historical Jesus Christ" and its presentation of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Jewish Messianic promises. It bears saying again that we approach this information yet as if "historical" but as our websites progress we will soon move to the "Mythical" and the "Mystical" presentations of "the" Jesus Christ. You might say we are in the process of cracking the egg shell regarding the "Jesus Story".**

- **THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF "THE" MESSIAH....WHY CAN'T THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS AGREE?**
  - **http://jewishmessiah.netfirms.com/**
  - **(Now we enter the beauty of Judaism and the truths they taught about their own Messiah and once knowing this then it is easy to contrast them with what we have been taught as Christians that come from our forged Christian Bibles. Ever wonder why the Jews and Gentile Christianity cannot agree on the Jewish Messiah? At last the unbiased truth concerning the Jewish Messiah and with it many explanations as to how the Christian theology concerning the Messiah deviates so drastically from the Jewish Messianic concepts as well as emphasis on the corruption of**

**the Gentile's religious texts (OT and NT) which culminates in the creation of a Messiah which was never prophesied by the Jewish prophets.....the answers for the Gentile Christian are not always comforting but if you want the truth it is here for the interested and unbiased student and true seeker of truth. This is a selective summary of what went before on the other sites where I pull together pertinent information concerning one topic and one topic only: THE MESSIAH. If your desire is to study what the Jewish Scriptures taught about the Jewish Messiah before they were altered and changed as they were purposefully mistranslated into the Greek and later carried over in their corrupted forms into the Christian's Old Testament and New Testament texts, then this material is for you. Along with this site is the examination of text after text not only in it's Hebraic original form but as it was altered and changed thereby causing New Testament believers to ignorantly accept and cherish beliefs about Jesus which not only are incorrect but which render them idolators before God).**

- **A TRUTHFUL ANALYSIS OF MESSIANIC PROPHECIES IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AS CONTRASTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN TRANSLATIONS...DID JESUS FULFILL THEM?**
  - **http://messianicprophecy.netfirms.com**
  - **(A very detailed examination of the Hebrew Scriptures and how they were later altered when translated into the Greek, Latin, and English versions of Christian Bibles. We trace the corruption of the Jewish Scriptures from the Hebrew in which they were originally written and show how these Jewish Scriptures were later purposefully mistranslated, misquoted, misapplied, and even invented in order to alter the human messiah into a "cosmic Godman" by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. Later these very same altered passages will become forced "fulfillments" when applied to Jesus in later Latin and English versions taken from the Greek forgeries of the Jewish Scriptures. We show repeatedly how the Greek translations were forged in order to include the Essene concept of their "angel messiah" and "cosmic Godman" and later how this concept would be further adulterated when applied to Jesus some two hundred years later through the further forgery of other Hebrew Scriptures by the Roman Gentile Church. In other words we show beyond any doubt how the Holy Word of God has been corrupted today. No wonder the Jewish people don't believe in the Christian Jesus; their Jewish Scriptures read completely different than those of the Christian Church in "key" messianic places)**
- **DANIEL 9:17-27: THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF YEARS AS TAKEN FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES**
  - **http://seventyweeksdaniel.netfirms.com**
  - **(We now look at a very problematic piece of prophecy. Of all the Old Testament scriptures translated and quoted (or purposely mistranslated or misquoted) by Christian evangelicals in hopes of finding validation to most of their Gentile Christian doctrines, Daniel 9:17-27 and Isaiah 53 are perhaps the two most popular. In both cases, Christianity relies on a claim that the only reasonable interpretation of those scriptures is theirs. But is this true? Have our Christian Bibles been forged to force fulfillments as applied to Jesus when the true Hebrew Scriptures read differently than our Christian Bibles? Well...it is time to see the truth for yourself concerning Daniel's 70 weeks and then you decide who is right....Judaism or Christianity)**

- **THE ESSENE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND ITS LEGACY OF SUN WORSHIP**
  - **http://essenecx.netfirms.com**
  - **(As stated earlier Divine Spiritual allegory and Spiritual Myths of the ancients have been "literalized by Rome" and presented to us in our Christian Bibles as if a "literal" and "historical" truth that fits into a time-line of Rome's making. We saw when we looked at the manipulation and adulteration of the Hebrew Scriptures let alone the testimony of Judaism for these last 2,000 years that the "Jesus" of the New Testament is not their "Jewish Messiah". We begin to see this Christian deception through a comprehensive and challenging investigation into the true origins of the Essene-Christian faith as we begin in ancient Egypt and it's worship of God. In so doing we spend some time understanding Egyptian Religion where astral-theology and solar-worship was personified into "savior Godmen" such as Osiris which is the first and the "pattern" of all personification of Divine Spiritual concepts that followed. We trace such personified solar beliefs through successive Gentile nations and make note of similarities as well as differences, until we come to the**

**Essene/Qumran cult, who, in rejection of normative Biblical Judaism because of their inability to assume the Priesthood following the Maccabee war, evolved away from Biblical Judaism and adopted these astral-theological religious ideas which had more in common with Egypt, Persian, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Pythagorianism, etc., than with Judaism. The Essene mistake is the same one Rome will make later; they will "literalize" these Metaphysical Spiritual concepts and "historicize" them and apply them to the Jewish "human" messiah in the likeness of King David (historically really the Pharaoh Tuthmose III) until we end up with a "corrupted Judaism" which is more commonly known today as Messianic "literalized" Christianity. It is the same perversion of purely Metaphysical Spiritual Concepts. What we find is that the Essenes "literalized" these prior Divine Allegories concerning Divine Truth of the incarnation of Divine Mind in "matter" and humanity as expressed by the Ancients down through time through the medium of Spiritual myths and symbols. It is in the hands of these apostate Essenes where these Divine concepts were "literalized" and were purposefully included in a falsified translation of the Jewish Old Testament called the Greek Septuagint (LXX). In this Greek perversion of the Hebrew Scriptures the human "anointed of God" becomes a Superman! In so doing these ancient Spiritual and Divine Mystical, Mythological and Metaphysical Concepts lose their original and intended meaning and these "radically reinterpreted" doctrines become parts of the Greek Old Testament for the Greek speaking world and for all later Christians and the Christian Church; thus providing the substrate for all later quotes of the New Testament. The bottom line being that personified Sun-worship which is the ultimate Spiritual and Divine Truth for all created manifestation was applied to the life of the hoped for and expected Jewish messiah as recorded in the New Testament and it is we, not knowing that these existing ancient Divine Spiritual Mysteries and concepts, which were only to be taken allegorically and symbolically, have been misled to see in them a "literal" and supposed "historical" understanding when these ancient Divine Spiritual Wisdoms were never originally intended to be taught as such. In so doing we spend a lot of time with these altered texts in order to see how this was done and how extensive this misrepresentation of the Ancient Spiritual Wisdom is exampled in our current Roman Bibles).**

- **PAUL...THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF JESUS...OR...SUBVERTER OF THE FAITH OF JESUS AND FOUNDER OF A NEW RELIGION...WHICH OF THE TWO DIFFERENT PAULS IS THE REAL ONE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?**
  - **http://paulproblem.netfirms.com**
  - **(Now we move to the Paul Problem. Let it be said that I am hard on Paul since the "real Paul" has been presented to us on the pages of this New Testament in a particular way and reinforced by 2000 years of Church Tradition. I must say that I deal with Paul "literally" as this is the way he has again been presented to us on the pages of the New Testament and in so doing I spare no ink in pointing out the problems this presents regarding a Jewish interpretation of "the Christ". Understand that this is a very challenging website which exposes the very depth of the deception behind the New Testament's presentation of the Apostle Paul. This website reveals the truth behind the purposeful manipulation of history and facts to cover up the truth about the Gnostic Paul who was supposedly understood by all in the first century to be an enemy of the Jerusalem church and remained so his whole life. I expose what the true religious belief system of Paul really is and show you how, in spite of the incongruities of the Paul Problem in the New Testament, is a synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism. That is not bad when we see that in so doing we are only restoring the Ancient Divine Spiritual Wisdom which had remained intact within humanity for over 10,000 years and only with the rise of Rome fell prey to their "radical reinterpretation" and "literalization" of the Ancient Spiritual Wisdom. Along with this I reveal this Romanized Paul and later pro-Pauline writers purposeful misuse of the Jewish Scriptures in their presentation to the non-Jewish world of a new replacement religion and how they made it seem as if this supposed "literalized" Jesus was the cause for it. This is strong stuff and not for the faint-hearted. We will look at Paul in a different light when he is later put into his Gnostic setting which is historically accurate then we can say "kind things" about Paul then so hold on; we need to find the "real Paul" and we don't have it yet since Rome forged all but 7 of his authentic epistles which he wrote and put his name on them. So we have to be hard on this**

Romanized Paul since Christians believe that he taught all the things that carry his name. Let me assure you he did NOT! We will see as we study that the blame for this deception is again laid on the lying pens of Rome so we deal on this site as "if" this Romanized Paul was responsible for these writings since we are taught he wrote them all by Church tradition)

- **LITERALIZED SUN WORSHIP IN ROMAN CHRISTIANITY AND THE BIRTH OF "GENTILE CHRISTIANITY"**
  - **http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com**
  - **(We move on now to look at more "literalization" of Sun-Worship as it was applied to the Jesus of the New Testament by the writers of the this New Testament. This is a very, very challenging study and expose of how "literalized Sun-Worship and how "literalization" of the Ancient Divine Spiritual Wisdom today is masqueraded as "orthodoxy" in Christianity. The subject matter is diverse and will require adequate reading on your part but well worth the price as you learn of the origin of the Divine Allegories and Sun Myths which were later personified by the Indo-Germanic nations and later written into the translation of the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. These accounts would be later embellished by the Gentile Church as they applied them to the life of the Jewish Messiah as represented through this Jesus as they build it off the falsifications of the Greek Old Testament as altered by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. This site exposes the false theology connected with Jesus which lines almost every page in the New Testament in one way or another. It is here we see that our "Jesus Story", taught to us as if a "literal" person, is but the repetition of the prior Divine Solar Spiritual Allegories of the nation's Sungods. Our "Jesus" is shown to be a collection of multiple personified identities collected and handed down through recorded history; such a collection of solar identifies is in truth a "nobody" when viewed again as if a "literal" and "historical" person. Not possessing this knowledge we read our New Testaments never aware that our "Jesus" is in truth not a "historical person" but behind this Spiritual Allegory is the highest Spiritual revelation that is possible to mankind. We just never knew it thanks to the Essenes and Rome's dishonesty with the Hebrew Scriptures. A through understanding of this site, as well as the others of Bet Emet Ministry, exposes beyond any doubt the lies and idolatry that has been foisted upon unsuspecting Gentiles who are yet today pawns of this theological deception and antisemitism of Rome)**

**This approach, teaching God's higher Divine truths through the vehicle of a godly example, the "assumed historical Jesus of the New Testament", works well up to a point because in doing so we are presented with a "Godly" example of a life to be emulated as found in the Jesus of the New Testament *(for the most part).* A life patterned after the Jesus of the "Jesus Story" will hopefully issue forth in one bearing the fruit of morality and ethics and a life lived in the Fruit of the Spirit. This is the reason why Israel does not evangelize today because Christianity has accomplished for them their task as God's Priesthood; for better or worse when looking at the Dark Ages and the impact of this "replacement religion". As a pastor I wish they could have accomplished this without the masked idolatry connected with the "Jesus Story". The non-Jew has learned of the God of Israel and has learned how to live in peace and harmony through the teachings of Christianity. Sadly in all of this the main character, the Jewish Messiah, has been so badly misrepresented in the character of Jesus who, for example, is made to cleanse all foods and abolish the kosher laws in Mark 7:14. This is rather strange for a Jew who is obligated to observe Kosher. Hopefully you see the problems of what I speak and they only begin here. Again through our websites the student is made aware of the problems inherent in many places in this New Testament's depiction of the New Testament Jesus and "the Christ within". Yet, in such a presentation this Jesus is the non-Jew's "pattern" for he, real or not, is the only Jew to ever witnessed to us and came knocking on the doors of our lives as non-Jews. Sadly the Jewish community is closed to the non-Jew for the most part due to the tragic treatment of their people by the Christian Church these last 2000 years. As I say often it is sad that when we answered the door of our lives as we heard the "knock" of this New Testament Rabbi named Jesus that we did not possess, at that time, enough knowledge of the truth about "the Christ" and the true "Jewish Messiah" that we could not recognize that this Jew named Jesus, as God's "light to the Gentile world", came dressed**

**like the idolator Constantine teaching a replacement religion. Lacking this knowledge which Bet Emet's Websites provide the student we fell for the Roman "counterfeit Christ" and "counterfeit Jesus" and no wonder the Jews cannot accept this Roman Jesus as their Messiah. Good for them! But hopefully as your studies mature you begin to see that there are other ways to understand the "Jesus Story" but surely understanding the "Jesus Story" as a historical truth concerning a literal person who lived 2000 years ago and who embodied the historical Jewish Messiah is not one of them. Now for enlightenment that will take your breath away!**

## DRASH

**Another level of Jewish hermeneutic and understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "drash" meaning "search", this is the allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. Creativity is used to search the text in relation to the rest of the Scriptures, other literature, or life itself in order to develop an allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. This process involves eisegesis (reading of the text) of the text. Ironically as I found this expression or interpretation of the texts reflected most accurately the type of "belief" of the earliest Christians (called Chrestians who believed only in the Gnostic Metaphysical Christ within) who were not only looking for a historical Jewish messiah to be revealed but at the same time understood that the "logos" or "the Christ/Sophia/Egyptian Karast" lived within all mankind and could never be limited to but one person as Rome will make it appear. This understanding of "the Christ" reflects Paul and his 7 authentic epistles where he teaches the "Christ within". Now we find the true Paul who, like the earliest Chrestians, taught only the "Christ Within".**

**As you might expect a few years later, as time allowed, Bet Emet provided a website dealing with the Mystical Interpretation of the "Jesus Story" and "the Christ" as we showed that the religious beliefs of the earliest "believers" who were called the first "Christians", long before Rome emerged to dominate the Christian faith, did not accept a historical Jesus at all but rather understood "the Christ" as a Divine Concept as Divine Mind that lives within every man and woman and is not exclusive to just one person as is portrayed today by "literalistic Roman Christianity. It is in this site that we restore the earliest Gnostic Christian understanding of the "the Christ" as it existed for almost 5 centuries before being utterly destroyed and almost totally wiped out by Rome with its replacement religion we have today which I call "Literal Christianity".**

- **MARCION AND THE "FIRST" NEW TESTAMENT...WHO WERE THE ORIGINAL GNOSTIC CHRISTIANS AND WHAT DID THEY BELIEVE ABOUT "THE CHRIST"....THE STUDY OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS**
  - **http://firstnewtestament.netfirms.com/**
  - **(Now we put all the pieces together and the whole picture comes into focus. We now look at the true Paul, a Gnostic which never taught a human Jesus Christ but rather "the Christ within" in his 7 authentic epistles. We trace in this website how the earliest "Christian" believed in the "Christ within" and not "a Christ without". We see how the ancient religious allegories were understood not only by these ancients who were given them but by the Gnostic Jews and Gentiles in the earliest centuries of the church as well long before Rome will come an "literalize" all of it and give it a fictitious historical time-line in creating a "historical Jesus". In so doing we will see how the earliest New Testament expressing these allegorical Divine truths is butchered by Rome and destroyed and how we end up with the forgery we have today. Never let it be said that archeology and hard study are not our friends. That is why Judaism has always taught that "study" is the highest form of worship!**

**An unbiased study of History will show you that there is not a shred of legitimate historical evidence anywhere that the "Jesus Story" originated as the biography of a man named Jesus, and quite a lot of evidence that it did not. An unbiased through study of Comparative Religion will reveal to you that the basic plot of the "Jesus Story", from beginning to end, including the motif of a crucified savior, already existed in many other religions thousands of years prior to the alleged time of Jesus and if you continue such dedicated studies into Astronomy**

**and Solar Mythology you will find that beyond any doubt the "Jesus Story" is nothing more than an allegory for what would naturally be the oldest and most important story humans would notice and write down; namely, that of the annual passage of the seasons of the year and the path of the Sun through the celestial sphere and the 12 Houses of the Zodiac during the year. Personification of the Sun through the sky as found in the story of ancient solar and lunar gods follow in chronological procession through the year the exact chronology of the "Jesus Story" when personified from Matthew chapter 1 through Matthew chapter 28. This truly is the most amazing study.**

**This website will be a lot different from anything you most likely have ever studied. Growing up in the Western Hemisphere we are traditionally taught a "literalistic" and not an "allegorical" or "symbolic" understanding of Christianity. This "literalistic" interpretation of "Jesus" and "the Christ" is based upon the inherited religious documents we received from Rome which we were taught to accept as infallible and inerrant without every questioning them. However great advances in Biblical Studies and archeology have been made in the last two hundred years and one in particular in the last 50 years has made a startling impact upon Christianity and few know of this. I am referring to the discoveries of the Nag Hammadi Library along with the Essene's Dead Sea Scrolls in the last 50 years which has turned our traditional Roman understanding of Christianity upside down and basically taught us that almost everything we had through we had "known" from Roman Christianity up to now concerning "Jesus" and "the Christ" was wrong. That is simply because when we discover from study of these archeological finds and see for ourselves that the First New Testament written and given to us by the earliest Gnostic Chrestians like Marcion and Paul did not teach a "human Jesus Christ" but rather an allegorical and symbolic "Indwelling Christ Only" as the Logos within each of God's children. This explains why there were no genealogies, birth or infancy narratives, or the 4 traditional Gospels in the earliest Gnostic Gospels and not added to the Roman Second New Testament till after 180 A.D. It is this "allegorical Christ" and "allegorical Joshua-Jesus Christ" ["pattern"] that the earliest New Testament and the authentic Pauline epistles taught but few know this today since Rome's efforts to destroy all of this literature by burning the libraries of the world as well as murdering the Gnostics until few remained to safeguard this Spiritual Metaphysical Revelation which can be traced to the beginning of mankind. In this website I reveal these truths concerning the "allegorical Christ" of the earliest Chrestians. Along with this we tackle the difficult problem of Christian forgeries of later Pauline Epistles and Gospels in their attempt to create a "historical Jesus" and a "historical Christ" in order to mimic their Godman-Emperor. This information goes a long way not only in explaining the lack of credible and unforged evidences for a historical Jesus but shows how a Second New Testament was latter forged in Paul's name, who was long dead, along with the names of long dead Apostles in Rome's attempt to place a historical Jesus of their creation within an appropriate time-line. By comparison of what was written and contained within the First New Testament with what was later written later by Irenaeus and others in Rome's attempt to refute the Gnostic Christ and the Gnostic Joshua-Jesus we can easily now come to terms with this creative theology of Rome which was little more than a synthesis of "literalized" Sun Worship as exposed on our other sites. What should strike you as you study these materials is that the concept of the "Logos" and the "allegorical Christ" goes all the way back to the beginning of mankind where God gave Revelation of Himself and His plan to the Ancient Egyptians who first wrote of the Karast/Christ and provided the "pattern" adopted by all later world religions until the rise of Rome!**

## SOD

**The 4th and final level of understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "Sod" meaning "hidden". It is here that I reveal the hidden links to Egypt and Astronomy which they "allegorized" to capture for all time the Divine Concepts that they witnessed written in the sky and Heavens above them. The Sky is God's Bible! When you learn to "interpret" the Sky and the stars then no man can deceive you about Divine Truth any longer! God, writing on the blackboard of the sky and Heavens, expressed to these Ancients sages and Priests eternal Spiritual principles that were later captured in "myths" and "legends" to preserver for all time these Godly truths that would last through all time and yet today survive in spite of the destruction of Egypt by Alexander the Great and later Rome. These Laws of the Cosmos were expressed in allegorical Spiritual myths that were reaffirmed by the same Laws witnessed operating in Nature. Ancient man, understanding that these same Laws operated within himself and his body saw therefore that "he was created in the image of God"; the**

**image he witnessed operating above and around him when noticing the same Laws and Cycles in the Heavens and in Nature operating within his physical body as well. This is truly beautiful when you see it as it brought tears to my eyes to see and comprehend Gods' earliest message to me and you that has not been changed or adulterated by the agendas of men and apostate religions down through history. It is so simple when you see it. That is the way God intended it to be in the beginning but we strain at a gnat and swallow a camel today with our highly developed and evolved theologies down through Christian history.**

**It has been a hard and long process for me to accomplish but my task is about through when I complete this website on the "Mythical Jesus Christ" as seen in the stars.**

**Now it is time to devote this website to the comprehensive understanding of the "Mythical Christ". In so doing we will prove that the "Jesus Story" is actually an allegory for the path of the Sun "personified" as it travels through the 12 Houses of the Zodiac and through the 4 seasons of the years (the Spring Equinox, the Summer Solstice, the Autumn Equinox, and the Winter Solstice). You will come to see that this is the oldest and most important story humans ever knew as it also is full of Divine Truths that are to be understood "allegorically" and not "literally" as we have erroneously been taught today by a literalized Christianity of Rome's making. The Sun was viewed by the ancient Spiritual Masters as the "visible representation" of the "invisible hidden reality" of God. This Sun and its path through the Heavens is repeated over and over again for mankind so that man cannot miss the Truth and Message of God involving the Spiritual evolution of his Soul. It is we today who have not a clue to this Great Bible in the Sky. We owe a great debt to Ancient Egyptians and their great wisdom and their foresight in preserving for the the world this earliest understanding of God and Divine Mind and its incarnation into "matter" and humanity where we trace by looking at the path of the Sun the birth, life, death, rebirth and progressive Spiritual Evolution of man's Soul.**

- **THE EGYPTIAN RELIGION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY**
  - **http://www.egyptcx.netfirms.com/**
  - **We have all heard that "all roads lead to Rome" but in reality all roads lead to Egypt. This is especially true when one studies Christianity and Judaism and finds that these sister-faiths are nothing more than evolutionary developments of the Egyptian Religion. Understand from the beginning that Judaism is a much more faithful picture of this Planet's original understanding of the Divine than Christianity. Judaism comes in a close second. As a Pastor I am amazed where my studies have taken me and the things I have learned over these last twenty years in my pursuit of Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith. Never did I expect to find what I have uncovered and consider myself fortunate to live in an age where archeology and other such disciplines are giving back to mankind what Rome destroyed, covered up, and took from us over the last two thousand years. The study of error is often a little less important than the study of truth. The history of the human mind, in its progress from ignorance towards knowledge should tell us the mistakes into which it has sometimes wandered, as well as its steps in the right path. This is the goal of this website: to re-examine Gentile Christianity as to its earliest roots and determine if what is considered "Christian orthodoxy" today is a faithful representation of the earliest understanding of God by the Ancients since it is they who coined the religious concepts which we are told that we adhere to today in the primarily Christian Western Hemisphere.**
  - **There is much to say about the knowledge contained in this Website but let me be brief. This website will reveal to you how the Ancients understood the message of God and His revelation to them from their critical observations about the Heavens and the sky as well as Nature. The Egyptians Priests and scholars understood that God was revealing His Laws and intentions in the operations of the Divine Laws that governed the Cosmos. These Ancients holy men saw that these same Laws operated within their own bodies as well and that they were "created in the image of God" as what God was doing "above them" and "around them" He also was doing "within them". These Ancients sought out God and His way like no other nation has ever done on the face of the earth and tragically this knowledge was lost to us until only recently with the discoveries of archeology. We must understand that when allegory, metaphor, simile, and myth which expressed both the identity and actions of the Creator as understood by the Ancients in grasping for**

**understanding of God and His workings in the Cosmos, was altered and stripped of its symbolism and rendered for all time as if "literal" by those who will come later through "conquest" and destroy Egypt and their understanding of God, then not only is Divine Truth lost forever but it plunges its recipients into abject idolatry. Such is the plight of the primarily Christian Western Hemisphere as these allegories and metaphors that once expressed Divine Truth were altered by Rome and "literalized" and applied to men's lives; in this case Jesus. If you have been diligent to study the website referenced just above this one then you saw for yourself this tragic loss of Divine Truth by Rome's "literalization" of such Egyptian Ancient truths concerning the "Logos" and "the Christ".**

- **ASTROTHEOLOGY AND THE "JESUS STORY" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: DOES IT ORIGINATE WITH THE STARS?**
  - **http://jesusastrotheology.netfirms.com/**
  - ***This website is presently under construction*. This will be the last website for Bet Emet Ministries and in so doing we will go where few have gone. In this website we will show beyond any doubt from Astronomical examples of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Constellations, that the Ancients preserved what they witnessed in the stars and Heavens seen in the cycles, patterns and paths and movements of these Heavenly orbs in "allegories" and in "myths" and "legends" not only concerning physical movements of these Celestial orbs as taken from their observations but expressed within these "solar myths" and "lunar myths" deeper Divine Truths of a Mystical Nature. These hidden deeper Divine Revelations from God to mankind dealing with the Spiritual Nature of mankind and his expected Spiritual maturation were again saved for all time through the agency of Myth which was never to be interpreted "literally" but rather were to function as "allegories" and "symbols" only that were but vehicles for transmission of higher truths from God. From these celestial patterns the Ancients extrapolated the Laws, Ordinances, Commandments, and Covenants of the Creator and gave them to mankind as a "blueprint" for our existence. These myths held the message of God to mankind. Later these myths were told through lives of personified man-gods like Osiris, Dionysus, Attis, Amon, Mithra, and Jesus. Since we include Jesus in the same sentence with other astral myths then this will be a hard study for as you examine the evidence presented you will see without a doubt that an unbiased study of History shows that there is not a shred of legitimate historical evidence anywhere that the "Jesus Story" originated as the biography of a real historical man named Jesus. In fact the evidence, or should I say the lack of it, and the forgery of all that does exist outside this one New Testament, is hard to deny and makes a belief in a historical Jesus almost impossible when knowing from the above studies the hundreds of forgeries in the religious texts of the Christian Bible. Nowhere outside of this one forged book by Rome can we find this "historical Jesus". As if that was not enough an unbiased and through study of Comparative Religion reveals to the reader as seen in the above studies and sites that the basic plot of the "Jesus Story", from beginning to end, including the motif of a crucified savior, already existed in many other religions thousands of years prior to the alleged time of Jesus and if you continue such dedicated studies into Astronomy and Solar Mythology you will find that beyond any doubt the "Jesus Story" is nothing more than an allegory for what would naturally be the oldest and most important story humans would notice and write down, that of the annual passage of the seasons of the year and the path of the Sun through the celestial sphere and the 12 Houses of the Zodiac during the year. What is most startling is when you see for yourself that the personification of the Sun and its path through the sky as found in the story of ancient solar and lunar gods follow in chronological procession through the year the exact chronology of the "Jesus Story" when personified from Matthew chapter 1 through then end of the book. The Synoptic gospels follow the path of the Sun in its travels through the sky from beginning to end. Most may have no idea of what I am saying I can only tell you to hold on and read the articles on this site and you will quickly come to see of what I spoke. Let it be said when you see this and that all the other "Jesus Stories" are but Ancient allegories of the Heavens and the Sun and its path through the Zodiac which was later "literalized" then without a doubt there is no more room for idolatry connected with any Jesus of any kind. Then we can follow in the footsteps of Moses and quit worshipping a false "god-man" and return to worshipping our Creator in Spirit and in Truth. You come to see that the "Jesus Story" is nothing but a retelling of the "Osiris Story" and**

**the "Horus Story". It is from these two Ancient Egyptian stories that all other "saviors" have come.**

**Orthodox Christians, since they are committed to a belief in the literal truth of the Bible, hold that after the flood men became even more evil than they were before, so that 4,000 years after the creation of the world, god sent his only begotten son to suffer and die for the salvation of the human race. This ministry of Jesus, the Christ, was supposed to be a unique event in human history but as we show it is anything but that; it is the repetition of everything that came before. This opinion of Jesus' uniqueness is no longer tenable among those who accept reason as the criterion of truth.**

**If you are diligent to study and read these websites then you have it all. There is little that exists that is not covered in one way or the other or has somehow escaped my attention over these almost 20 years of study. There is nothing I would trade for my years of study and the truths that I have gathered and although it has been challenging to my very core I fully am aware that because of such serious studies my walk with God, the true God, is closer than ever. It is truly well with my soul because "I KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT HIM SEPARATED FROM ALL THE FICTION" that men have written down through history to promote their own religion and political agendas.**

- **THE SACRED MYSTERIES....OUR LAST WEBSITE**
  - **http://thesacredmysteries.netfirms.com**
  - **This is what we have been waiting for; the conclusion of all of our websites and the final answer as to just "Whom" is this "Jesus" we have heard about all our lives and how this should affect our lives for the better. Central to the ancient Spiritual Wisdom is the concept of the Divine Spark/Cosmic Fire or seed buried within each person. It was the purpose of the ancient Spiritual Mysteries to bring to life this Divine Spark in the life of every person so that it would illuminate life on this Earth and so aid mankind in its Spiritual evolution of its True Self and True Being which is Divinity "incarnated" into "matter". This Divine Spark embedded within the "animal" body which housed man's Soul and Divine Mind was symbolized by various figures and characterizations at different times down through recorded history and in different nations and places. We find these symbolisms today in the nations as their personified Sungods and Goddesses which are preserved for mankind in the nation's Divine Legends and Spiritual Mythologies. Their names were Horus, Orpheus, Dionysus, Mithra, Krishna, Adonis, Tammuz, Hercules, Ishtar, Isis, Persephone, and even Jesus and so on. They were all labeled by Rome to be "pagan" Christs but these Divine Myths are, when correctly understood and interpreted correctly, are the highest expressions in metaphors and allegories of man's True Divine Self; as Plato has so appropriately said man is a "god in an animal body". The philosophers of the ancient world and even the ancient Egyptians before them knew that these figures were only symbolic of the highest Metaphysical reality within mankind and were never to be understood or taken to be historical men or women; it is we who do not understand this precious ancient Mythology today. Many writers today write of this subject completely devoid of its true understanding and mislead millions in so doing. These Divine Truths in these Spiritual Mysteries are "Spiritually discerned" and eclipse the intellect of many.**
  - **We will see in this website that over 5,000 years ago in ancient Egypt and some 2,000 years ago in the area of the eastern Mediterranean, the Divine Soul or Spark within humanity was called the Christ (from Krst, Karast or Krist, Egyptian for the anointed ("messiah") mummy). What we find when we wade through all of this ancient theology found in ancient Egypt and the Gnosticism and Spiritual Mysteries of the ancient nations is that early Christianity was nothing new at all; in fact it was originally before the rise of Roman "literalism" only the re-statement of the ancient Spiritual Wisdom and Gnosticism of the ancient Spiritual Fathers as far back as ancient Egypt and beyond and not a replacement of this Spiritual Wisdom as Christianity as we know it today has tragically become. We come to see that a "radical reinterpretation" of almost all the ancient Spiritual Wisdom was the legacy of Roman Orthodoxy. Christians of any intelligence during the first two centuries at least did not regard their movement as the bearer of the first light into the heathen darkness, but only the republication of very ancient Spiritual Truth. If you undertake this study with Bet Emet you will find what all do; namely, that the earliest of the Church Fathers and their writings attest to**

**this very fact that "True Christianity" (the religion of "the Christ" within humanity) has been with mankind since the beginning of time. Augustine's quote to truth will wake the dead! Sadly today Rome as "radically reinterpreted" all the ancient Spiritual Wisdom in order to dominate and control the world through fear and ignorance and in so doing forcing it through the doors of the Roman Church to avoid the supposed "fires of Hell" which don't exist by the way; it worked....we call the legacy of such theological inventionism today the Dark Ages and it lingers in our Churches Sunday after Sunday and billions and billions of people have walked through their lives following "another Gospel" and "another Christ" never knowing that they never had the Divine Truths that this Creator imparted to humanity in the beginning of its infancy. The truth of this matter is that the indwelling god is himself being brought to birth within the womb of humanity; in you and me. This is our calling, this is your purpose; to aspire to progressive Spiritual Perfection by reaching toward the mark of your high calling in "Christ". We come to see in this website that man is a Spiritual Intelligence, who has taken flesh with the object of gaining experience in the worlds below the Spiritual, in order that he may be able to master and to rule them, and in later ages take his rightful place in the creative and directing Hierarchies of the Universe. Man, being himself, is to come to know the Divinity whose life he shares. Each individual is gestating a Divinity within the depths of his own nature from life to successive life. Yes, Christianity taught reincarnation as do all major world religions and did so until 533 A.D. when a vote of hands struck this Divine Law of Science and Physics from the pages of intended Spiritual Truth but once it was heard shouted in the halls of the Vatican.**

- **Christianity has fervently exhorted us to look into the empyrean to find the unapproachable God. All the while the infant deity slumbers unheeded within the heart awaiting to "come forth" from the "dead". Yes, resurrection from the dead was something to be experienced on this side of Jordan as the Gnostic Paul so appropriately says: *Eph 5:14 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. (KJV)* Christianity has largely nullified the force of St. Paul's almost frantic cry to us: *"Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is within you?"* In fact we have heard of it all our lives but never recognized its because "being born again" has again had its "true meaning" radically altered once again by the Roman Church.**
- **In this last of our website we will see that the supreme Creator was at first given various names, such as the First Cause, the Great Spirit, God, the One. Creative energy emanates from the One and manifests in various ways, depending on the plane or level of existence that is involved. The ancients understood that the the gods of primeval religion were the active manifest powers, faculties, organs of God himself that flourish in the Universe and Cosmos. Nature was understood by the Spiritual ancients as God's body, elemental forces the agents and messengers (angels) of his operative economy, Universal and Divine Mind His thinking faculty and the ultimate contribution His Spiritual heart to mankind and all of this was imparted and incarnated into mankind awaiting "awakening from the deadness" of Spiritual apathy and ignorance of his True Being. The ancient system of Spiritual Wisdom thought it not blasphemy to define the organic structure of deity to explain to human grasp the cause and nature of the world. Reverence was not withheld from even the lowest instrumentalization of Godhood and its manifestation in our physical realm. The ancients deemed it not dishonoring to deity to recognize His being in all things. They saw God manifested in nature, and not as abstracted from nature. And they studied nature as the living garment of God's immanence. In so doing many cultures compare the Creator to the Sun. The Sun pours out its life giving rays, as does the Creator. In order to exist, all life absorbs a tiny amount of energy from the Sun. The Creator is our Spiritual Sun and it is the very embodiment of our cells and their nucleus. There have been various solar gods, such as Ra, Apollo, and Christ but they are all nothing more than personifications of the "Internal Sun" that is the core of every cell in our bodies and the very Living Conscious Energy within each cell that makes the Body of Christ or as the ancient Egyptians termed it the "Body of Ra". We come to see that there are many levels or planes of existence or manifestation. There are terrestrial and celestial worlds (as Paul says), noumenal and phenomenal realms, physical and ethereal planes, material and spiritual bodies, heavens, fairy-lands, underworlds, hells, limbos, Isles of the Blessed, Elysian Fields, the meadows of Aarru-Hetep and**

**homes on high. And the beings on these worlds and planes of existence range from high divinity down to man and these beings are shown to be the very "gods" and "goddesses" of which we read in the ancient mythologies of the nations. The ancients understood that God, through the Law of Incubation and Incarnation, has filled all "matter" with Himself with an intended purpose of perpetual Self-awaking and Self-awareness of Himself. In all that exists, even in mankind, God has His being and He lives and moves and has His being in us as He does in all "matter". Through the Law of Dismemberment God has "fragmented" Himself into infinite Divine Sparks that has "fallen" into "matter" and incarnated Himself into all existences as we see in the Egyptian Ennead, the Egyptian Ogdoad, and Jewish Kabbalah. Here again we see that all the world's religions before the rise of Rome shared the same Spiritual Ideas of God, man and Cosmos. All of life is shown to be perpetually evolving Spiritually until the Universal Mind inherent in all "matter" achieves the "fullness and stature" of the Divine Mind or "Krst/Christ". This is what Paul actually says in Ephesians 4:13 13:** ***"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:"*** **This is why the "only Christ" that exists is the Divine Mind which "fell into matter" to save the Souls of mankind which equally "fell to their deaths" in "matter". This Divine Mind we see in his "fall into matter" was termed by the ancients the "death of Christ" as they recognized this "fall" of Christ to his "death" involved the "crossing of planes" of Celestial existences and termed this the "Crossification" or the "crucifixion of the Krst" or "the crucifixion of the Christ" in order to save the Souls trapped in Amenta/Hades/Hell and material incarnation in "matter". This is the only truth taught about the allegorical "dead of God" or "Krst/Christ" which was taught for thousands of years and existed in such integrity in all of the nation's ancient Spiritual Wisdom and was always taught in all world religions and their Spiritual Myths and Divine Allegories down through time until the rise of Roman Orthodoxy when the "indwelling Christ" and gestating Divine Mind was "externalized" and "separated" from humanity and confined to but one person of Rome's historical invention, the "Jesus" of the New Testament. In this "Jesus" of Rome's devise we can yet find if we possess the ancient "keys" to correctly interpreting the Ancient Spiritual Wisdom which has been so tragically twisted by Rome the compilation and synthesis of all "incarnated Christs" down through ancient religions which is so perfectly personified down through history by the ancient Spiritual Wisdoms of the major world religions; all having in common the same idea that man is a "god in an animal body" slowly evolving himself in his return to his Fathers' House as the Prodigal Son Divine Allegory so appropriately states. Let me finish this with a quote from Paul:** ***"Know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless ye be reprobate?" (2 Cor. 13:5).*** **It is here we find the ONLY Christ ever given humanity and mankind will ever know! It is here we must call forth the Christ "from the dead" within us:** ***"Come Forth"*** **must be our cry as we find the Son, the Divine Mind in us, calling forth the Father from the "dead" within us and all humanity as we see so clearly in the resurrection of Osiris by Horus, his Son, the Egyptian Christ, which is re-told in the "Jesus Story" where the Jewish Christ calls Lazarus forth from the dead; "L-Asar-Us", is Egyptian for Lazarus in Hebrew. Here we see "Asar" is Osiris, the Father God of "the Christ", who is called forth from the death to which is "fell in matter" . Here we see Horus calling his Father God Osiris from the dead within in all humanity to where humanity comes to know its True Self as Divinity in "matter". Humanity is to experience the Lazarus story personally. The cry is to come forth for every person as Paul shows us:** ***Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, (KJV)*** **Shame on you Rome for such a terrible deception that has robbed from mankind these last 1,800 years his true Divinity and purpose of his incarnation!**

**So we began our study with the question:**

***Matt 16:13 13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? (KJV)***

***Now you have you the "plan-o-gram" to find all the answers! ?The rest is up to you to study to show yourselves approved by verifying what we show you .....then you can be assured that you will not stand ashamed when you meet this Creator face to face when you cross your Nile/Jordan...(the same)***

# IN CLOSING

**As stated earlier we begin our study with Bet Emet Websites with a "historical" assumption and present studies to show the beauty of Judaism over the dishonesty in Christian theological dogma and do so by using the depiction of the New Testament Jesus as if "historical" because he provides a vehicle for the teaching of Jewish theology, monotheism, morals, values, ethics, etc. It is not my purpose to reveal the weaknesses behind such a historical presentation of Jesus at this time as it will be developed and proven at a later time as one's studies progress through the Mystical Jesus and the Mythical Jesus as detailed on the above websites.**

**Of concern for us of course is the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament and its reliability as understood "literally" since it is being taught as a literal truth today about a historical man who lived 2000 years ago. You will come to see in time as you study that the Ancients as far back as Egypt understood this "Karast/Christ" entirely different from how we have been taught today under the direction of Roman and Protestant Christianity. Here are some big questions for you to ponder in light that most Christians trust in this Jesus Christ for their Eternal Salvation.**

- **Answer for yourself: Who or what is truly behind the name "Jesus Christ"? Can it be proven that the "Jesus Story" is nothing but the personification of the Sun and its passage through the various houses of the Zodiac as it passes through the 4 seasons and the equinoxes and solstices? If so then what do you do now?**
- **Answer for yourself: Are the infancy narratives and later depictions of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in the New Testament nothing more than solar stories told as allegories which were later "literalized" and subsequently written into Rome's New Testament and depicted as a literalized historical Jesus Christ when in fact they were understood by the Ancients as astrological myths taken from astronomy?**
- **Answer for yourself: Did Rome destroy the Gnostic Christ of the earliest "Christians" which had existed since the beginning of time over the first 5 centuries of the early Church and replace it one of their own making? What are you to do when you see this from your studies on our Websites?**
- **Answer for yourself: If I study the Websites and find that the "Jesus Story" follows chronologically the Gospel of Matthew from chapter one through the end of chapter 28 and see for myself that the "Jesus Story" presented there parallels identically the personification of the Sun in its path through the Zodiac then what should this mean to me regarding my belief in Jesus as the historical Christ and him being the Jewish Messiah?**
- **Answer for yourself: Have we as Christians and followers of the "the Christ" been deceived by Rome and spent a good part of our lives worshipping a man as God as Rome has declared in their New Testament since the Nicean Council (325 A.D.) when in fact we should have been worshipping the one true Creator as the Pharaoh Moses (Akhenaton) instructed when he stood up to the religious establishment of Egypt when some were straying from the truth in their worship of the "godman" similarity to what we have done today with Rome's historical Jesus? Are we guilty of idolatry as Christians because we have believed a fable no more real than Snow White and the seven dwarfs?**

**Well the following studies in the above websites is not for the weak of heart as I will present over and over again infallible proofs that the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament is but a hoax perpetrated upon us by Rome in their hatred of the Jewish faith and Jewish Gnosticism back in the first century. You will see, in the last websites depicting the Mythical Christ, as we move chronologically from one sign of the Zodiac to the other, from month to month, from season to season, from Spring equinox to Summer solstice, from Autumn equinox to Winter solstice, and repeating again this cycle, along with the study of selected events from the**

**depiction of the life of Jesus in Rome's New Testament, that if you study with us and finish the studies on this website, that the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament is nothing more than the literalization by Rome of the path of the Sun through the Zodiac along with other solar myths later incorporated into their "Jesus Story" as later literalized by Rome as well. In so doing you will see as I and many others have that we have not been taught the truth about "the Christ within" and how He is so integral to the proper worship of the Invisible God as Egypt and Moses taught. It would seem that Egypt got it right in the beginning but thanks to Hellenism and Romanism we lost these earliest and correct understanding of Divine Concepts witnessed in God's Heaven and Nature. In a way these were our classroom and where we were to be instructed by the Creator about our life and purpose in God's creation. We are truly blessed today to live in an age where archeology and the information age can bring these truths back to life for you and me.**

**As a "retired Pastor", and moved by what my studies revealed over the years, I feel moved to share this information and evidence from such studies with those interested in the truth behind the origin for "Jesus Story" which is taught to the world today as a historical reality when in fact it is not. In the websites that are delineated above such evidence is presented to the reader in hopes that the missing puzzle pieces concerning the "Jesus Story" will be plainly evident to him and he can, in the light of such knowledge, no longer be deceived by the astrological allegory of "the Christ" as found in the New Testament which is erroneously taught "literally" today. I make very few promises to our readers but I make this one now: If you do these studies, and read these articles on this website then you will be thoroughly convinced as I was that the "Jesus Story" was never meant to be understood "literally" as it has been taught to you and me. Thus the worship of Jesus as a historical person or connecting this assumed historical person with God or believing him to be God is the most vulgar idolatry according to Moses and the Ten Commandments and a terrible affront to the Creator and constitutes blasphemy of the Name of God.**

**Home**

**Links to further articles for your study.**

**How to obtain the CD.**

**How to properly study the CD.**

- **Bet Emet Ministries**
- **Craig M. Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div.**
- **902 Cardigan**
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR “HOUSE OF TRUTH”

### HOW TO OBTAIN THE TEACHING CD FROM BET EMET MINISTRIES

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**Greetings**

**In response to your request for the CD that contains all of our published studies, sixteen websites on important areas of thematic studies "key" to proper interpretation of Christianity and the Bible as it exists today, then we ask that you consider a small donation to our ministry that allows us to continue to procure necessary materials to further studies in these important areas that archeology and Bible scholars today are bringing to our attention. I ask that you consider a minimum donation of $50.00 for literally my life's work, a work going on presently thirty years of devoted scholarly study into the true origins of the Christian faith. Along with the CD comes a 10 page detailed instruction as to how to approach these studies "in order" for there is a intended path and order in which they need to be studied and addressed for their maximum benefit to the student. It is rather like climbing the stairs of ancient Spiritual knowledge; you cannot get to the 16th step without successfully and properly traversing the first step and the steps in between and then in consecutive "order." This assures a constant and progressive evolution of Spiritual thought. This "order" in your study of the CD is critical if one is to build upon new knowledge and follow the studies one step at a time and not get "lost" or overwhelmed by so much "new information." So often we read the end of the book first and get confused or just quit, or worse, we get scared about what we learned or read that might contradict what we have been told to believe in blind faith, not knowing how we get there. At times, most difficult "conclusions" can be made less painful when we slowly take these steps and journey into new information and knowledge in a step-wise progression. Thus, sequential thought is a vital necessity in order to trace the evolution of, and at times, departure from these Ancient Divine Spiritual Truths that all mankind were given in the beginning of Creation, truths concerning our Creator and Christ, truths held sacred for over ten thousand years before the rise of Roman orthodoxy with its "literalism" which destroyed and radically reinterpreted everything people believed about God. Today we are so far from this One Truth, this "faith once given the saints," and such a condition is a crying shame and the fruit of the world, especially in our country which prides itself of being a Christian nation, speaks of such a departure from the Creator's will for mankind. I am sad to report that Christianity is mainly to blame, in fact, for over the last 1,800 years Rome and its Christianity has sadly been a leading culprit and the greatest sinner in this tragic departure from Divine Truth. Today, living in this Information Age, there is hope for your "return" to "the" Faith once given the Saints and this CD will show you exactly what we have "lost" and how we are to "recover it all."**

**If you would like to obtain this CD with instructions then please respond prayerfully with your gift of $50.00, either by check made out to Craig Lyons, or by PayPal to my email address, bennoah1@verizon.net, for this abundant truth that will not only change your life as never before, but reveal your incarnational purpose. I ask that you respond as the LORD lays on your heart to:**

- **Craig Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div.**
- **902 Cardigan**
- **Garland, Texas 75040**
- **Cell: 972-480-7192**


**Let us never forget that the Word and Truths of our God are not bound. Please share this knowledge you are learning with others for we are moving into a new age of awareness in a Cosmic sense; it is time for mankind to take their next step in the evolution of their Spiritual consciousness as we strive to become one with the Divine ONE Himself. And this cannot happen without truth and knowledge. Remember, the only religion that God ever gave man was TRUTH!**

**Blessings to all...Craig M. Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH

### RECOMMENDED PLAN OF STUDY FOR THE CD

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**Greetings**

**As many of our readers have come to know, Bet Emet Ministries has been an "evolving" study over the last twenty years since dedicating myself to coming to the correct understanding and interpretation of the "Jesus Story." Following Seminary, the "Jesus Story" which at one time seemed to me to be a simple story worthy of simple belief in the New Testament from the perspective of the pew, was shown to be nothing of the sort. In fact, in Seminary it became evident that it was a collection of jumbled and conflicting misquoted and mistranslated Scriptures and texts in Hebrew, Greek, and English Bibles, which when compared with each other, contradicted and conflicted each other in so many ways that a Divine hand behind them stretched believability to the utter breaking point. Surely, I reasoned, that God, if the author of such writings and Christian texts, could have agreed with Himself and quoted Himself accurately if He were behind the production of the Christian Bible. The disagreements between these New Testament texts are astounding. John Mill, in 1707 C.E., listed over 30,000 textual variations in the Bible and today estimates of textual differences in the New Testament exceed 400,000. Some scholars say even more. What I mention is not simply copyist errors and omissions; rather, I speak of conflicting theologies and beliefs depending upon which manuscripts you choose to include in your "Bible," The Jews had theirs, Catholicism, had theirs, and Protestantism had theirs. Even other ancient nations like Ancient Egypt had their own versions of what later would be called "the Jesus Story," only theirs was called "the Horus Story" in their Egyptian Book Of The Dead. Central to all of these texts and all of these Bibles since the beginning of time is the idea of Divinity mediating with material existence through "the Krst/Christ" or whatever each nation called Divine Mind that "fell" and "incarnated" into physical existence and "matter" and exists as Consciousness. The stories of this creation, Divine consciousness in material existence, and mankind's awareness of it have been told since the beginning of time and almost in every nation to nation down through recorded history. Being born in America we grow up with the "Judeo-Christian" story of this same ancient creation account along with related stories to help man understand that behind all that his senses can see and experience there exists a God, a Creator and Ultimate Origin of Spirit-Life along with His Krst/Christ (Divine Mind and Consciousness). What concerned me was that my "religious belief" was centered and was founded upon certain "texts" that I was told to trust for my understanding of this God and His outreach to me. But, seeing the unreliability of these conflicting and contradictory texts in Christianity alone, I had to wonder, as my studies advanced, why my Christian texts and Scriptures deviated so drastically, not only from each other, but the earlier Hebrew Scriptures as well as others later included in the New Testament in "key" theological positions regarding, for example, the Jewish Messiah as well as "the Christ" (termed Jesus) in the New Testament. When this awareness of the textual problems in Christianity is factored in to other religious studies like comparative religions, gnosticism, hermeticism, astronomy, ancient Egyptian religion, etc., a blind man can could see that in the 2nd through the 5th centuries a concerted effort**

**was made by Roman Christianity to change the ancient "Krst/Christ Story" which had been held sacred since the beginning of time. I wanted to know why, the greatest and most ancient story ever given to mankind, the story of God's Krst/Christ incarnated in every child of God, was so distorted and corrupted and given different meanings beginning with the 2nd through the 5th century, from what it had been understood by the whole of mankind for over ten thousand years. I wanted to know why what was universal and applied to all human beings was lifted out of its original context and limited to one supposed human being, the Jesus of Nazareth in the New Testament.**

**Basically, I needed to answer two questions:**

- **Matt 16:13-14 13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"**
- **Matt 16:14-16 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"**

**Little did I know at that time that my life would become dedicated to finding the answer to these two questions and sharing the reason for these beliefs with others not as fortunate to be able to study the sources that provide these long lost answers to mankind. That was thirty years ago and my personal studies would become the foundation for Bet Emet Ministries to help others wade through all of the conflicting theologies and find the answer to the greatest questions that life will ever pose to them.**

**If this CD is to prosper you then you need to accept the following axiom:**

**"A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, the study of Gnosticism as well as Comparative Religions, Egyptian Religion, Astronomy and Astrology, and Archaeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change...that is, if 'truth' is your goal"...Craig M. Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div. The only religion that God ever gave mankind is Truth!**

**The results of my search for this truth concerning "the Krst/Christ" are most exhaustive and comprehensive and can be found on various websites but they are also available on a CD for those wishing to speed up their studies in these important areas. I know this amount of information and knowledge on this CD and our Ministry's websites can be overwhelming at times but remember this is a collection of studies into the origins of Christianity that separated from its mother's faith of Judaism and which told the world that it is the only way to "Salvation" and all other paths to God guarantee damnation and a burning hell and torture for those who reject the traditional Christian message that "Jesus saves." If Christianity, as it exists today, is to be validated as God's truth, then it has to stand up to scrutiny of its religious beliefs and its Scriptures and texts from which these beliefs are derived. I will let the student decide these issues for himself when he is acquainted with the evidences presented on the CD regarding the textual contradictions in the Christian Bible when compared with the Hebrew Scriptures, but he needs more than "belief" in texts that conflict among themselves if he ever hopes to find the truth of this matter. He will need to develop a critical and scholarly eye when reading the Bible because textual variations and irregularities are but part of the story. We are faced with more than the corruption of Messianic prophecies, we must come to an awareness of the Ancient Wisdom and Soul Science of Ancient Egypt and its wholesale corruption by Rome in the New Testament as well. The problem lies in the presentation of mystical and metaphysical Spiritual truths as if literal and historical facts concerning only one person, Jesus of Nazareth, to the exclusion of the whole of the human race.**

**Needless to say, there is a proper sequence to the study of this CD, and if not followed, then the student could easily lose his way and not come to the truths that he desires. Along the way, if this order of study is not followed and adhered to, at times the truth-seeker most likely might become frustrated and put down this most important metaphysical information concerning his Soul and never take advantage of this opportunity presented him. Therefore, we begin our studies with a "literal" and "historical" study of "Jewish Roots of Christianity," mainly because this is where we all start out, given that we inherit as children a literal and historical approach to reading and understanding the Bible. We begin with a literal and historical approach and perspective to the Bible, its narratives, and its Scriptures as they are subjected the critical study and analysis in**

**ascertaining if they, when understood and interpreted in such a way, are historically accurate and factually reliable. As the study advances, we gradually move beyond the "literal" and "historical" understanding of the Christian Bible once seeing that the Bible, in the light of archaeological and textual discoveries today, is seen to be a pseudo-history at best to which "mystical" and "metaphysical" concepts are inter-dispersed. The "key" to proper understanding the Bible correctly lies in coming to know "when" and "where" these interpretations changed from a mystical and metaphysical understanding of the ancient Scriptures to a literal and historical understanding of them. We end our studies as beneficiaries of the knowledge gained in them, where the "mystical and metaphysical" interpretation of the Scriptures of the Bible are restored and with this, the truth veiled within its verses. Recovered is the truth behind the Divine Sacred Mysteries which is the "hidden knowledge" that has always laid behind what appears at first glance in our Bibles to be a simple "literal" and "historical" story, but which is much more. It is here in these beginning websites, when seeing the "literal" and "historical" interpretation of the "Jesus Story" for what it really "is," an and what it is "not," along with personal awareness of the corrupted Hebrew Scriptures on which the "Jesus Story" is made to stand by Rome during the 2nd through the 5th century, that we can in full confidence move onward to find the truth behind the "Jesus Story" when read esoterically, mystically, and metaphysically.**

**The Rabbis always taught there are 4 levels of interpretation of Sacred texts. A person begins with milk, or the literal and historical understanding of the text, but as he Spiritually matures, he puts away the simple reading of the text and looks deeper to the hidden Spiritual realities buried and concealed and veiled in the text and Scripture. You cannot give a baby what it cannot digest until he grows and matures, hence the simple reading of the texts suffices for children and those who are not fully awakened to the presence of the Spirit in their lives. However, when of full age, only the Spiritual understanding of the text will do. What applies to milk and meat, equally applies to Spiritual food. It is said in the Book of Hebrews 5:12-14: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." St. Paul also reminds us in 1 Cor 15:46 46, that everything beings with the natural and evolved to the Spiritual: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." Again, we might begin with the natural, or the literal and historical approach to the Scriptures, but we are not to remain there our whole lives; we are to grow and evolve Spiritually, graduating slowly through all four levels of Scriptural interpretation, finally culminating with the Spiritual and metaphysical interpretation of the Bible's texts and Scriptures.**

**Our simple "Jesus Story" suffices for most people until the Soul in man cries out for more. There is more, much more! The truth beyond the "simple" lies in "awaking from the dead" whereby we no longer want Spiritual gerbers' food but the "strong meat" for those who desire to come into the "fullness and stature of Christ". This, admittedly, and sadly, is not for everyone at the point in life to which you might find yourself possibly today. But if you want "strong meat" and the "Secret to Life" and the knowledge of your "True Self" and "Krst/Christ Within," then this is the "mystery hidden from the foundation of the world" and it is for you. Your time has come and it is now! Understand that the ancients who handed down to us this Sacred Book, these Hebrew Scriptures, had its origins in Ancient Egypt. The Jewish people came out of Egypt where they were born into higher Spiritual Truths than the "simple" stories of our Bibles appear to teach. The Bible, at best, is a pseudo-history to which "encoded" Divine "mysteries" are hidden in symbol and glyph and lie sleeping behind "simple" stories; the "keys" to which are needed if we ever hope to open the eyes of the Spiritually blind and Spiritually dead. This will become familiar to you as your studies advance.**

**Again, there is an order in which this CD is to be "studied and followed." There is a "step-by-step" awareness that must be adhered to if you don't want to get "lost" in such abundance of information. Looking back on my life, I did not always know to follow "the path" from step to step, but sorted it out over the years and when stepping back ever so often to analyze the horizon of my studies. In so doing the "order" became apparent. to me and will to you, the reader and student, if you adhere to it. You are recommended to follow the "path" but if your current studies are at a certain level beyond the "first steps," or the milk of the Word, then by all means begin where you feel comfortable. But it is important that you follow the "evolution" of "thought" as we first**

**must deal with all of what we have been taught is "literal" and "historical" in order to prove through serious study that "it is not." Only then, can we begin to look at what lies in wait for us behind the hidden mysteries in the "Osiris Story," called today the "Jesus Story" today. The Spiritual enlightenment you will receive will be the most incredible journey of your life. In fact, your incarnation is purposed in discovering this Divine Truth in this plane of existence on Earth. In fact, this knowledge and understanding revealed by the ancients and incorporated on this CD is the sole purpose of our incarnations, to "become the fullness and stature of this Christ" in Presence and Power while living in an "animal body" throughout this Earthly life. Plato said, "God is a man in an animal body." It is time we find that out and experience this Spiritual truth for this is the purpose of our Earthly incarnation.**

**Consequently, here is the suggested order for the study of these various websites and the path I would recommend they be studied:**

- **CHRISTIAN JEWISH BIBLE - THE WORLD MOST MISTRANSLATED AND MISUNDERSTOOD BOOK**
- **RETURNING TO THE JEWISH ROOTS OF THE EARLY CHURCH BEFORE THE RISE OF ROMAN CHRISTIANITY**
- **LAWS OF NOAH GENTILE RELIGION - THE GENTILE FINDS HIS PLACE IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD**
- **GODFEARERS - FAITH IN ACTION**
- **HISTORY OF FORMATION OF NEW TESTAMENT**
- **MESSIAH - IS JESUS THE FULFILLMENT OF THE JEWISH MESSIAH & THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES?**
- **SUPPOSED FULFILLED PROPHECY EXPOSED - THEN WHO IS JESUS THEN?**
- **DANIEL 70 WEEKS - DO THEY REFER TO JESUS?**
- **ESSENE CHRISTIAN FAITH - JEWISH ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY**
- **PAUL PROBLEM: WHO IS THE REAL PAUL? ROME'S FALSE PAUL OR THE GNOSTIC PAUL?**
- **ARYIAN SUN MYTHS - THE NATION'S SUN-GODS**
- **MARCION NEW TESTAMENT - THE GNOSTIC AND METAPHYSICAL FIRST NEW TESTAMENT BEFORE ROME'S RADICAL REINTERPRETATION OF IT**
- **EGYPTIAN CHRISTIANITY & THE BEGINNING OF THE "KRST/CHRIST STORY" [THE JESUS STORY]**
- **ASTROTHEOLOGY AND THE "JESUS STORY" - TRUTH REVEALED THROUGH THE COSMOS TO MANKIND ABOUT HIS SOUL**
- **THE SACRED MYSTERIES - EXPERIENCING THE TRUTH OF THE INDWELLING CHRIST IN YOU**

**Following this "pattern" of study, the one in which we start out scrutinizing the Old and New Testaments texts "literally" and "historically" as we have been taught since children, we advance in our study step by step, eventually coming to see that a "literal" and "historical" interpretation of these Sacred Texts as we have been taught to read and interpret them in the Bible, both Old as well as New Testament, is foolish let alone unbelievable to a sound mind. Not only that, they are not historically factual as archaeologists and Egyptologists affirm in today's Information Age. We start out as Christians reading and believing our inherited "Jesus Story" both "literally" and "historically" because we have been told that we must "believe and be baptized" or be damned. What we fail to realize is that God never said that; the religious clerics and monks that continually altered and forged the Bible's texts did. What we do find, however, step by step, is that under the religion of Judeo-Christianity, under the typical "literal" and "historical" understanding of the "Jesus Story," an interpretation that cannot hold up when exposed to many infallible proofs today that prove it faulty, lies a completely different understanding of this "Jesus Story." The "Jesus Story" is the oldest story in the world, told as the "Horus Story" for over 10,000 years or more and never was it told or related in its most ancient forms "literally" or "historically"! Never was it taught as a story about only one person to the exclusion of the human race. Never was it a story about "another;" it was always about every God's child, you and me, as we come to know and understand that the whole story of the dying and resurrection godman was the story of the incarnation and awakening of the Soul within mankind from the deadness and darkness of Earthly matter. On**

**the surface Bet Emet Ministries reveals to the student that the "Jesus Story" cannot be "believed" in such a manner as we have been given it (a lesser mystery), but should be understood as we Spiritually grow and evolve upon a much deeper level (higher mystery). As our studies continue to advance, we will come to see the "Jesus Story" as a much higher Spiritual revelation given to mankind about his True Self and the God and divinity evolving within him. It is this understanding of one's True Self and his inherent Divinity that the ancients connected with man's second birth called being "born again" in our texts. But reading these texts today with Rome's imposed literal and historical understanding and without the ancient understanding of the Ancient Mysteries completely nullifies the true meaning of being "born again" as well as our incarnational purpose as your continued studies on the CD will reveal. Ironically, the studies on this CD can be compared to the dying and resurrection seen in the "Jesus Story;" revealing what the "Jesus Story" is "not" meant to be taught on a "literal" and "historical" level as a supposed story of someone else, other than yourself! Only when we come to see and understand what the "Jesus Story" actually stands for, and when understood as did the ancient Spiritual masters who "mystically" and "metaphysically" understood the "Krst/Christ Story," only then can we ever hope to find the indwelling God within us and no longer look outside of ourselves for the Kingdom of God or the God of the Universe. As Christians we inherited this wonderful story built upon 2,000 years of imposed mistranslations and misquotations of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is time to see the truth about Jesus and restore the ancient true Spiritual meaning to these texts.**

**What you must keep in focus in such a study is that when all of the present knowledge is sifted looking for truth using as unbiased scientific method as possible, then we find that down through history the Spiritual masters of our race has understood "this Christ" that dwells within us as the manifestation of God in 2 basic ways:**

- **The Mystical Christ**
- **The Mythical Christ**

**Over time we find that from these above two methods of interpretation of God and His Christ "within us" there developed a 3rd interpretation of "the Christ"**

- **The Historical Christ**

**No matter how far you go back in time and no matter in what nation you look, you find that the first, and in my opinion the most correct understanding of God and His relationship to "matter," i.e., mankind, is found with Egypt and the nations that learned of the Creator from them. It is here we find "the Mystical Christ" and the "Mythical Christ" and when correctly understood these religious beliefs and understandings of the Divine hold the greatest understanding and secrets of the Divine that exist on our planet today. Opinions on Egypt are divided today but there are scholars emerging today that challenge the current understanding of Egypt expressed by such current voices as the Egyptologists Mark Lerher and Z. Hawass who refuse to acknowledge the Spiritual greatness of Ancient Egypt, being that Hawass is Muslim. Today's modern scholars are restoring the greatness and understanding of Ancient Egypt as the world's first monotheistic nation which we see when correctly understanding their Ancient concepts of God and the Egyptian "Krst/Karast/Christ." It all began a long time ago, over 10,000 years ago or before, and archaeology today is overturning the erroneous understandings we have inherited of that time and beliefs which are largely due to Roman religious censorship down through Church history. As your studies grow in these areas you will see why we are challenged to our very core by what these Ancient Spiritual Fathers understood of God and His Cosmos and His Christ in lieu of what we have been taught today about the "historical Christ" and the "historical Jesus" from Rome with their Second New Testament. In other words, Rome is responsible for replacing the first Gnostic New Testament of Marcion with the second New Testament of their own making.**

**Being born into Christianity we inherited a "literalistic" interpretation of almost everything we read in the Bible never knowing without serious study that this book was at best an allegory placed in the historical development of the Jewish people (themselves originally Ancient Egyptian that left Egypt in the Exodus). We, not knowing this, read this book with "literal glasses" never realizing that what we were reading is at best "blurred" religious concepts of the Ancients which they never interpreted "literally" but only "allegorically" or "metaphorically." Make no mistake about it, these stories, when understood as "mystical allegories", expresses**

**a "literal" Divine Truth that is not about another, but about the person who comes to an awareness of them. Only then does metaphysical and mystical truth before literal and historical for each individual person. We must never forget that when told through the medium of legend and myth the identifies of the characters (Osiris, Horus, Dionysus, Attys, Mithra, Jesus) were but anthropomorphic vehicles designed to express Heavenly Spiritual truths and were never to be understood as if "real people" or "historical characters." In other words, these "gods" and "goddesses" and "godmen" were never real but expression of the allegorical and metaphysical "godman" evolving in each of us when we come to understand that man truly is the "Temple of God" or the "Temple of the Holy Spirit." We are the Divine Himself trapped in matter through the Descent of the Soul from Heaven into material existence, or the flesh of human body. These Spiritual concepts began with Egypt as did most of what we have heard taught in our Churches our whole lives in one way or the other although, more often than not, they have lost their original understanding, meaning, and interpretation as taught by the Ancients who first gave mankind these Divine messages and Spiritual truths. In its place, we have been given a "radical reinterpretation" that has caused us to fail to grow Spiritually in ways our Father intended, all the while looking for a Cosmic-God-man to both come to us and do for us what we are to do ourselves as we come into the fullness of our true identity as God's Christ through our Earthly experiences. We have lost so much through the "literalization," "historicization," and "limitation" of these Divine Allegories and Myths. to one supposed human being when the factual evidence for his human existence is wanting in the opinion of most modern scholars today. The incarnation of Jesus in a manger is only an allegory cleverly crafted to show that Divinity has incarnated into an animal body. Let us not forget again Plato reminds us that man is a God in an animal body. This story is not the story of one person to the exclusion of all humanity; it is our story and my story as a child of God. This principle of universality is applicable to every part of the "Jesus Story." The "Jesus Story" is "our" story, your story, and my story. This is the repeating story that we find all the way through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, when the Bible's texts and Scriptures are read mystically and metaphysically.**

**To see and fully comprehend this beyond any doubt, since having learned so much incorrectly, we must unlearn error by being "retaught." That is why I present the beginning studies and websites with a "literalistic" and "historical" method of interpretation as that is where we both began our pilgrimage to God in our birth faith of Christianity. In so doing I chose to use this method of interpretation to help the "babes in Christ" grow to see at first, for example, the beauty of Judaism as the legacy of Ancient Egypt since it is the best and truest expression of these Ancient religious beliefs and revelation of these Ancient Spiritual Masters that we have existing today in the world. There is no "literal" "godman" in Judaism unlike Christianity and therefore no threat of idolatry unlike what we innocently inherited with our Roman Christianity and Protestantism. This "literalism" of these Divine Concepts as confined to but one person as we find in the "Jesus Story" is to be understood not as a blessing but as a curse when your depth of study advances to see the "Gnostic Christ" within which, by the way, modern scholarship teaches us today was the earliest understanding of "the Christ" as held by both Jewish and non-Jewish Gnostic Christians in the early Church before the rise of Roman Christianity. Let us not be so naive to not know that winners of wars write history from "their view" and that this has been done by Rome and the world fed "their book" at the point of a sword. Hence, the Bible and the New Testament became popular by force. As your studies advance, the insightful reader will come to notice the blending of both the "Gnostic Christ within" and the "historical Christ without." The "radical reinterpretation" of "the Krst/Christ" begun. with Rome. However, Rome should have done a better job editing and altering these New Testament texts as they left trace evidence "here and there" in these same texts which they corrupted and forged that betrays their untrustworthiness in "key" theological places. Rome forgot to change them all! The insightful reader and scholar comes to see these over time and the dichotomy and tension between "two different Pauls" for example, or the differences between one of the Paul's message and the message of Jesus becomes apparent. One Paul agrees with the message of "the Christ;" the other Paul does not. All of this is on the CD and available as well on our websites. That explains why so much of the Pauline epistles contradict what he has said in other places and people believe Paul to be schizophrenic. Trust me, the real Gnostic Paul had it right! Rome's false Christ does not.**

**I use the "literal" method of interpretation in reaching the student with the knowledge he needs concerning such areas of study found in the early websites which deal with Judaism vs Christianity, the Covenant of Noah, the Biblical Pattern of Worship as best expressed today for the non-Jew again as found in Judaism which is**

**without the taint of idolatry, the adulteration and corruption of Christian Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, Pauline issues, issues of the Messiah and Messianism as viewed from Judaism vs Christianity, Messianic prophecies, Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy, the Essenes and their corruption of the Hebrew Scriptures when they translated them into the Greek LXX, and finally the introduction of sun worship as applied to the Christian Jesus and his depiction in our New Testament. All of the beginning websites are approached with a "literal" view in order to contrast the teachings of Judaism and factual history, with those of these Roman Christian texts which are made to say otherwise. In so doing we see contrasts as well as parallels that bring into question the validity and reliability of what we have received as supposed Christian truth and texts through "church tradition" and "Christian doctrine" and "Christian theology" concerning these above many issues and dogmas between these two religions. This manner of interpretation is done to make you, the reader, think as he see the unreliability and untrustworthiness of a literal and historical interpretation of most texts in the Bible. I truly believe that if God is not the author of confusion then these studies will expose these contradictions and textual variations to such a degree that mankind has to be blamed for such confusion and textual tampering of the Bible and its texts when New Testament texts are compared to the Hebrew Scriptures. The blame lays squarely upon Rome and their replacement religion of Christianity which took the place of Biblical Judaism for both the Jew and the non-Jew.**

**After seeing these things, and after thoroughly exposing the unreliability of a literal or historical interpretation of the Bible's works and narratives, we move to a deeper understanding of "the Christ" when we look at Gnostic Christianity and their "Gnostic Christ;" the "Christ Within" which I believe to be not only the same understanding of "God Within" mankind as taught by these Ancients but the correct interpretation of the Christ as first held by the earliest Gnostic Christian followers of "the Christ" before the Spiritual concept was later "literalized," "carnalized," and "historicized" by Rome after the Jewish War of 70 C.E. It is here we vindicate the true Paul that our previous attacks upon him as the false Paul of Rome's devise seem to some confusing. The Gnostic Paul never taught a "historical and fleshly" Christ that was limited to but one person. Now Paul, having exposed the conflicts and contradictions in the Paul of the New Testament, can be seen for what he both is not and what he truly was, a Gnostic Christian. Rome's forgery of the true Paul is so clumsy that when these things are pointed out, surely no one can come away such such study a believer in Paul as a human being let alone a true historical person. The true historical Paul is a Gnostic Christ and in this way, and this way only, can the true historical Paul be seen and understood correctly and his mystical and metaphysical religious views concerning "the Christ within" be exalted and promoted and given credit where credit is due. Laurels to Paul can only come after you have come to see the big difference between an "internalized Christ" and an "external Christ" made by Rome's forgery of his epistles and letters long after his death. This is why I take great pains to contrast the Hebrew Scriptures and religious teachings vs Roman Pauline Christology and theology that we have inherited in our forged Christian Bibles and New Testaments. Rome has done Paul a great disservice and dishonored his ministry and name for almost 2,000 years presently and few know it due to their lack of study in these critical areas concerning the "Mystical Christ" and the "Gnostic Christ" evolving within mankind. It is in these studies we contrast the "literal interpretation" of "the Christ" with the "allegorical" interpretation of the Krst/Christ which we show goes back to the beginning of time as delineated on our Egypt Christian website as well as the Marcion Gnostic First New Testament site. It is here that I expose the fallacy of the "literal" interpretation of "the Christ" and the deceptions behind the "historical Jesus" as a literary creation of Rome when Rome's monks "carnalized the Christ within" over the early centuries of the emerging Gentile Church. It is here we don't hold back and with prior conditioning of the student and reader from his previous study of the introductory websites where we say the many textual corruptions and deceptions, I expose the sad facts that an unbiased study of history will show you. For example, there is not a shred of legitimate historical evidence anywhere that the Jesus Story originated as the biography of a man named Jesus, and quite a lot of evidence that it did not. Outside of this one forged book, the Roman Bible and the New Testament, there exists not one piece of unforged or unadulterated evidence for the historical existence of this man from Galilee. I go on to show the reader that an unbiased thorough study of Comparative Religion will reveal to you that the basic plot of the "Jesus Story," from beginning to end, including the motif of a crucified savior, already existed in many other religions thousands of years prior to the supposed alleged time for Jesus. If you continue such dedicated studies into Astronomy and Solar Mythology, you will find that beyond any doubt the "Jesus Story" is nothing more than an allegory for what would naturally be the oldest and most important story humans would notice and write down, that being the annual passage of the seasons of the year**

**and the path of the Sun through the celestial sphere and the 12 Houses of the Zodiac during the year. Personification of the Sun through the sky and Zodiac as found in the story of ancient solar and lunar gods follow in chronological procession through the year the exact chronology of the "Jesus Story" when personified from Matthew chapter 1 through chapter 28. This is an amazing study to say the least.**

**For an educated man or woman to believe that the studies and evidence presented and brought forth included on this CD is but "coincidence" stretches belief beyond limits of sanity. Besides any serious study of Ancient Egypt will show you that this "Jesus Story," or the original "Horus Story," existed on 2 levels: the Mystical and the Mythical. Only later will Rome come and reinterpret these Divine Truths and forge them into a Historical time line as a fictitious make-believe person and in so doing, Rome destroys the Ancient truths and Divine Revelation given the Ancients who first developed these "religious doctrines" in the first place. So when you see these truths laid out on the CD, and I mean all of this, then there is no room for a "Historical Jesus."**

**Yet to teach these truths of ethics and morality that is found in the "mind of Christ" expressed through Judaism to the Gentiles, and having been preconditioned to a Jesus-centric faith into which we are born, it is necessary to teach through the vehicle of this "literal Jesus" in the beginning of our studies and in so doing slowly begin to widen the scope of the reader's learning and thereby gradually introduce him to these other concepts and origins of the "Mystical and Mythical" Christ. In so doing we slowly expose the "Historical Jesus Story" for what he is; namely, a huge falsehood which is truly only a Spiritual allegory and personification of the evolving and indwelling Christ which was later "literalized" and "historicized." This "radical reinterpretation" of God's indwelling Christ and Divine Mind was later added to Marcion's First New Testament and forged into Rome's Second New Testament in their grand scheme of replacement religion. Sadly Ancient Egypt is destroyed today but her children and her truths live among her children, the Jewish nation and Biblical and Rabbinic Judaism. For me, if you want to find the Messiah and the mind of such a one like whom this Jesus is for me, an "example to be emulated" for all mankind, then we must begin to look in Judaism and in Ancient Egypt for Spiritual truth. In my opinion, it is here we find "the mind of Egyptian Karast (Krst)" who is the original Christ. These Egyptian mysteries were continued by the Gnostic Christians and the authentic Paul who only wrote 7 epistles and who never taught a "fleshly Jesus Christ." Only when Rome forged later anti-Gnostic religious writings is Rome's Paul given credit for belief in a "historical Christ" which again I, and other scholars, point out was never his true belief. Only later do we tragically find that these metaphysical concepts revealing God to man, as coming down through recorded history from Egypt, to be destroyed when "literalized," "carnalized," and "Christianized" in Rome's New Testament.**

**But some might wonder and ask "where did all this come from originally"? Well I deal with that on the CD, revealing as I do, the "Mythical Christ" as taken from Astronomy and Astrology of the Ancients as they read the stars and Heavens and saw within them and the movements of the Cosmos the varied messages of the Creator to mankind as interpreted in the cycles, patterns, the path of the Sun, moon, planets, stars, constellations, risings, settings, eclipses, etc. The message of Heaven, the Cosmos, came down to Earth. Spiritually insightful people understood it and gave it as best they could to others as they could and would accept it. It is all there and the wonder never stops as these Ancient Spiritual Masters saw and understood "Divine Messages" in the Heavens which they brought down to Earth and applied to the Soul of mankind and its pilgrimage and development into this "Karastlikeness" or "Christlikeness" which the Creator intended. This might sound impossible to one now who is not well versed in such areas of study but believe me these teaching will take your breath away as you see the depth of Spirituality of our Ancients compared with the religious fare we are fed today from our Christian pulpits and TV. If you ever wondered "where is the beef" you have found it here I promise you and the recommended book list on Egypt will feed you forever.**

**In closing, approaching these websites it is best that you first read the attachment "websites" as I have reworked this presentation and it exists today as refresher and explanation of the content of each Website. In reality, it is a type of "plan-o-gram" for your studies from beginning to end. This is the best way in my opinion to approach these varied subjects in order where you move from the inherited "historical" view of "Christ Jesus" to the "Mystical Christ" and finally to the "Mythical/Metaphysical Christ" and in so doing keep an organized pattern of study. This is the goal and it can be accomplished quite easily if you do as I recommend. It will only require your desire and time to accomplish. If you do, you will come to see how the God that lives and**

**moves and has His being in us all was stripped from us and in so doing, man lost the knowledge of his incarnational purpose.**

**Also attached is our "recommended book list" to show you where you can go to examine these findings for yourself and I recommend many good books which I own and have devoured over these last 30 years. I leave you with my blessings and again thank you for your gift and support of our small and humble attempt to restore the truth concerning God and His Christ to the world as He was first revealed to mankind in the beginning of time before greed, ambition, antisemitism, and the agenda of men and religious politics robbed us of such wonderful truths concerning "the Christ within." I pray that this CD will not only enlighten you to these higher Spiritual Truths but as well as you to find the fullness and stature of Christ in your own life whereby you can experience the Presence and Power of your indwelling divinity.**

**Last but not least, when you insert the CD into your computer, each listing of each Website has within it a file labeled “index.htm.” This is the master file for the whole website that allows you to navigate from page to page and your studies progress. Just click on “index.htm” and the opening page of each website will be opened for your study and all links are to be activated from this page and subsequent pages. I pray your study will open your Spiritual eyes like never before. It has been said: “The only religion that God ever gave mankind is truth.” I concur!**

**Home**

**Links to further articles for your study.**

**How to obtain the CD.**

- **Bet Emet Ministries**
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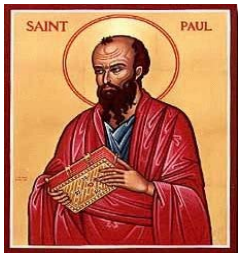
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




## THE PAUL PROBLEM: THE PURPOSEFUL MISCHARACTERIZATION OF ST. PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### HOW MANY DIFFERENT PAULS ARE WRITING SCRIPTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? THE CONTRAST OF THE GNOSTIC PAUL (THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF CHRIST) AND THE ANTI-GNOSTIC PAUL (THE SUBVERTER OF THE GNOSTIC CHRIST AND FOUNDER OF ROMAN CHRISTIANITY)

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**Two figures dominate the pages of the New Testament more than any others: Jesus and Paul. Few Christians ever study the New Testament Scriptures close enough to discern that these two characters and their Spiritual messages are quite different from each other in many ways. In fact, it is possible with enlightened study to discern that there are two different "Pauls" and two different Spiritual messages from two different Pauls in the New Testament. Few Christians have ever seen that two different messages regarding Christ emanate from the New Testament Paul and that these messages and teachings contradict and oppose each other completely from beginning to end. Modern Bible scholars today are alerting the masses to the fact that there exists numerous anti-gnostic passages in the Pauline corpus of writings that have been inserted and interpolated into the authentic Pauline Gnostic Scriptures and texts by someone other than the real historical St. Paul. Even Bible scholars who maintain Pauline authorship of many Epistles that carry Paul's name have noted significant differences between the world of thought in these authentic Pauline Gnostic letters and the forged and falsified anti-gnostic Pauline Epistles in the New Testament. These scholars of the Bible today tell us that there suddenly exists throughout the authentic Gnostic Pauline Epistles with their doctrine of wisdom many places where anti-gnostic texts and dogmas are dispersed among the texts in order to confuse the reader as to the Gnostic nature of the authentic Pauline Epistles. Today modern Bible scholars tell us that six of the thirteen Epistles that carry Paul's name are recognized to be forgeries of letters that definitely were not written by the Gnostic Paul himself.**

**Thus, there are two very different "Pauls" in the New Testament. First, there is a Gnostic St. Paul and a "Petrine" Paul which is a later attempt to portray the Gnostic Paul as being anti-gnostic by Roman Christianity which was forged by them at a later date. For almost two thousand years, Roman Christianity, and her daughter, Protestant Christianity, have read the Pauline Epistles and taught their congregates that the Apostle Paul is the opponent of Gnostic Christianity and its "Secret Wisdom." As Christians, we are told that Paul preaches a historical Christ Jesus who was crucified on an old rugged cross in I Corinthians 2:2 and proclaims a resurrection of the dead after the demise of the biological body which is used by the Soul as the vehicle for its Spiritual evolution. In other words, the St. Paul of the New Testament preaches traditional Roman Christianity along with its dogmas and doctrines which oppose the earliest expression of Gnostic Christianity that existed until the 5th century of the Common Era. Long before the four gospels were penned, it was St. Paul who supposedly, according to Roman exegesis of the Pauline Epistles, fought the good fight of faith against the Gnostic Christians who St. Paul supposedly called the**

**"Ministers of Satan." We are led to believe by textual eisegesis by the Roman Church that the supposedly false apostles mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11:13 were Gnostic Christians who deceptively passed themselves off as apostles of Christ , when the truth of the matter is that the Gnostic Paul penned that verse and intended it describe the "Petrines" of the Jerusalem Church as well as those who taught a literal and historical Jesus Christ. Of course, history reveals to us that Orthodox Roman Christianity will follow in the steps of the Jerusalem Church and teach the dogmas of the Petrine Jerusalem Church and their literal and historical interpretation of "the Christ. "One thing is for certain, a person does not have to look long or hard today to find Christian commentators that maintain from reading the Pauline corpus of Epistles that St. Paul repudiated the secret wisdom, gnosis, and knowledge that the earliest Christians Gnostics taught before the rise of Roman Christian orthodoxy. But did he really?**

**If this Petrine and later Roman Christian view of St. Paul is accurate, then it is hard to account for the fact that when the Gnostic gospels were uncovered in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1949, that most all of them claimed that St. Paul and his Epistles were the primary source of their Gnostic theology. In spite of what the Roman Church Fathers and heresy hunters said in their writings, it appears from the Gnostic gospels and writings, that Gnostic Christians and leaders, instead of repudiating St. Paul as their obstinate anti-gnostic opponent, claimed St. Paul proudly as a Gnostic initiate and as their apostle. To these earliest Gnostic Christians that existed long before the rise of Roman Christian Orthodoxy, St. Paul was their "Gnostic apostle." This description of St. Paul not made by the Gnostics as we might expect. This description of St. Paul as a Gnostic is found in the confessions of Irenaeus in his Adversus Haereses (Against Heresies), a five-volume work written by St. Irenaeus opposing Christian Gnosticism in the second century who was one of the chief heresiologists who fought against the Christian Gnostics in the later part of the 2nd century and early part of the 3rd century of the Christian era. Clement of Alexandria, Egypt, an important Gnostic Church Father, declared in his Stromata that the famous Valentinus was a hearer of Theudas, and Theudas was in turn, a first-hand disciple of the Gnostic St. Paul. Archaeological discoveries reveals that Valentinus, the best known and for a time most successful early Christian gnostic theologian, alludes to St. Paul very often in his writings, calling him "the apostle." When all is said and done, the Nag Hammadi Gnostic discoveries reveals just how profound is the Pauline influence on the Christian Gnostics in the first and second century of the Christian Gnostic tradition. Central to this influence of St. Paul among the Gnostic Christians is the "mystical" themes found in Pauline theology in his Epistles where believers are said to participate in the baptism, death, and resurrection of Christ. All through these Gnostic writings discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, allusions to Pauline "mysticism" and the Pauline Epistles and Scriptures are to be found from beginning to end. This presence of Pauline Scriptures and dogmas running through the whole of these Gnostic writings discovered at Nag Hammadi is both unexplainable and perplexing, given that testimony of the Church Fathers who endeavored to paint St. Paul as being anti-gnostic. Also amazing is the fact that all through the Nag Hammadi Gnostic writings, there are to be found allusions constantly to other New Testaments Books that many attribute to Pauline authorship or possible Pauline authorship like Romans, I and 2nd Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and the Book of Hebrews. It is in these Pauline writings, or writings of others Gnostic writers who were pro-Pauline or Paulinists, we find such dogmas as immersion and baptism being described as a "dying with Christ;" Paul's teaching on a person's resurrection with Christ, and Paul's exhortation on participation in the body of Christ. Examination of these new archaeological discoveries involving these early Gnostic Christian writings, have revealed that it was Irenaeus who so terribly and deceitfully slandered these Gnostic Christians when he said that all Gnostic exegesis and Gnostic teaching was based upon unwritten oral traditions and sources not contained in Scriptures. The actual archaeological discoveries of these Gnostic Gospels and other Gnostic writings reveal otherwise. Christians and Christian writers who have been swayed by Irenaeus and his slanderous writings for the last eighteen hundred years, tended to accept Irenaeus' judgment of the Gnostics without question when he characterized the Gnostic Christians being opposed to the authentic Christian "tradition" which was considered Roman Christian. Without a doubt, it was these earliest Gnostic Christians where were the authentic Christians long before the rise of Roman Christianity. The Gnostic Christians responded to such false charges by maintaining that the sources for their mystical and metaphysical religious traditions and dogmas were Paul's own personal letters and writings that contained within them heavy amounts of Gnostic teaching, Gnostic theology, and Paul's own secret wisdom tradition.**

**Before us then, is a war of exegesis of the Sacred New Testament Scriptures shared in common between both theological camps, the Gnostic Christians and the anti-Gnostic Roman Christians. This is described today by modern Bible scholars to be the war for the interpretation of Scripture, the Gnostic Paulines on one side and the Petrine Roman Christians on the other side. This war raged not only in the 2nd century of the Christian Era, but this same war over the true exegesis of the Scriptures by the Gnostic Christians who resorted to a mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical exegesis of the Sacred Scriptures, and a false literal and historical exegesis of the Scriptures by the Roman literalizers and historicizers of divine revelation, exits in our day as well. The warning from 2nd Peter 3:16-17 comes to mind where Peter cautions his fellow Christians that the "unlearned and unstable" brethren have "distorted" the letters of "our beloved brother Paul." Even at times, as seen in the admission of various Church Fathers, for example Irenaeus and Tertullian, many controversies raged between anti-Gnostic Roman Christianity and Gnostic Christianity regarding not only over Pauline pro-Gnostic exegesis of New Testament texts, but included as well the charges by Gnostic Christians that Orthodox Roman Christianity was guilty of interpolation where they added anti-gnostic Scriptures to the seven authentic Gnostic Pauline Epistles as well as altered other Scriptures from the hands of the Gnostic St. Paul. Thanks to the archaeological discoveries in the last sixty years, we can today trace the two antithetical traditions of Pauline exegesis in the New Testament that emerged from the late first century through the second century of the Christian era. Each of these traditions claim, Gnostic Christianity and later Roman Christianity, claimed to be the authentic expression of Christianity. In spite of this, with the rise and authority of Roman Christianity, orthodox Roman Christians from the 2nd century onward were taught to both interpret and understand the Pauline Epistles anti-gnostically, even thought St. Paul was a Gnostic Christian and opposed Petrine Christianity which would later be adopted by Roman Christianity as well as seen in their literal and historical exegesis of the Scriptures and teaching of the literal and historical Jesus Christ. Opposed to this, Gnostic Christians were taught to read, understand, and interpret the Pauline Epistles gnostically. Hence, we discover in New Testament two conflicting images of St. Paul in the New Testament: the Gnostic Paul who was the "apostle" to the Gnostic Christians and teacher of secret wisdom to Gnostic initiates on the one hand, and the anti-gnostic Paul familiar to most of us today from the Roman Christian tradition, on the other.**

**It has been hypothesized by scholars such as Hyam Maccoby in his Paul and Hellenism and Elaine Pagels, with her The Gnostic Gospels and The Gnostic Paul, as well as the mystical authors Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy in their The Jesus Mysteries and Jesus And The Lost Goddess: The Secret Teachings Of The Original Christians, that Paul of**

**Tarsus was a Gnostic who developed the early Christian church as a mystery religion with a Jewish flavor, and that elements of this church would, over time, come to forget or misunderstand the mystery elements in the teachings and earliest New Testament writings of the Gnostic Paul. Consequently, over time these Gnostic Christians would come to largely abandon their Jewish foundation, and in so doing, come to mistakenly accept and adopt a literal and historical interpretation of the Scriptures and texts. The argument for Paul being a Gnostic is based on arguments about the authorship of the Pauline Epistles. With only seven of St. Paul's Epistles being seen by most modern Bible scholars today as authentic, the Pastoral Epistles (I and 2nd Timothy, and Titus), are generally acknowledged as being clearly anti-gnostic. In these Epistles, the Gnostic Paul is falsely portrayed as an antagonist against the "false teachers" who "set forth fables and endless genealogies." Given that the Epistles to Timothy have been forged by anti-Gnostics and are grouped with other Pauline writings in the New Testament, the typical reader of the New Testament assumes the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, both in terms of Pauline authorship and their presentation of St. Paul as being anti-gnostic. Hence, Paul is claimed through such textual forgery as the ally of Rome against the Gnostics. This is all together rather strange given that the Gnostic Valentinus, who once in his life came close to being assigned the prestigious position of Bishop or Pope of Rome, cited the same books being of Pauline authorship as did the earliest known Pauline collection attested from Alexandria, Egypt. It needs be said that the second Epistle to the Thessalonians clearly refutes certain gnostic interpretations of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians which is one of the Gnostic Paul's authentic Epistles. Most confusing then is that some see St. Paul as being a Gnostic Christians while others see him being anti-Gnostic. What is going on? How could St. Paul have become to both theological camps, the Gnostic Christians as well as the anti-gnostic Roman Christianity, the hero of both opposing theological camps in the earliest centuries of the Christian Era? How could St. Paul be claimed to be the apostle of the Gnostic Christians who read and interpreted Sacred Scripture allegorically, mystically, and metaphysically as well as Roman Christians who read and interpreted Sacred Scripture literally and historically at the same time? Textual forgery of the earlier Gnostic Paul's writings and Epistles is the answer.**

**The answers for this enigma becomes clear once we realize that the Gnostic Christians taught. First of all Gnostic Christianity taught that all of humanity was divided into 3 groups of people. Human beings, consisting of flesh, Soul, and Spirit, or the Divine Spark of God within them, is divided into classes representing each of these elements. The purely corporeal, otherwise called "hylics," lived completely in the flesh of their bodies under the total sway and domination of their animal natures. These people were not destined for salvation and eternal life following the death of the animal body. Gnostics, otherwise called "pneumatics," had awakened to the divine within them in this Earthly life and knowingly nurtured the growth and evolution of God and the Divine Spark within them and their salvation and eternal life following death was certain. Lastly, there were the Christians who stood in between these two groups, otherwise called "psychics," who could attain a lesser salvation through faith. Given this designation, it is easy to see how the "Jesus Story" worked on two levels at once. First, the "Jesus Story" was to be viewed, read, and understood as an introductory story for Psychic Christians initiated into the Outer or Lesser Mysteries. It was here that the Scriptures were read literally and historically, and from them ethical and moral teachings were basically the goal to be gathered from a literal and historical rendering of the texts. This same "Jesus Story" was to be viewed, read, and understood by Pneumatic Christians who were initiated into the Inner or Greater Mysteries as a mystical allegory of the incarnation, descent, evolution, and eventual ascension of the Soul. Although the "Jesus Story" was understood in two completely different ways, the story remained the same and so did the Scriptures, or at least they were supposed to have remained the same. As we will see, that did not happen. Thus, we see, the original intention was that both the Gnostic Christians and Roman Christians could share the same Scriptures; they only read and interpreted them differently.**

**According to the Gnostic Christians, and characteristic of Gnostic exegesis of Scripture, Paul's Epistles were likewise designed to work and teach on two levels at once. Theodotus of Byzantium, an elementary Gnostic writer from the late 2nd century, said that "each one knows the Lord in his own way: and not all know him alike." So, on the one hand, the Gnostics taught to the Psychic Christians the "Jesus Story" where the Christ was born according to flesh and was destined to suffer and eventually become "Christ crucified." To Pneumatic Christians, those with a higher Spiritual maturity, desiring the strong meat of the Word of God, the Gnostic taught Christ "pneumatically" or "according to the Spirit." Each level of initiate would take from the teachings whatever they were wise enough to be able to hear and discern. The Gnostic Christian would say that St. Paul, when he wrote 1 Corinthians 2:14, had in view the Psychi Christian: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Thus like the later gospels, Paul's Epistles were encoded with secret teachings so that uninitiated readers, the Psychic Christians, would hear one thing and the initiated readers would hear another. Only those initiated into the secret oral teachings of the Inner Mysteries, the Pneumatic Christians, were capable of understanding Paul's deeper Spiritual meaning veiled in the texts and Scriptures. Gnostic Christians claimed that Psychic Christians, like the Petrines Peter, James, and John of the Jerusalem Church, make the mistake of reading the Sacred Scriptures only literally and historically. Only when initiated into the deeper Inner or Greater Mysteries, could a person learn to read Paul's letters on the symbolic level, as the Gnostic St. Paul intended. Gnostic Christians taught that only the pneumatic reading of the Sacred Scriptures yields "the Spiritual truth" instead of its mere outward literal and historical perception which was never the deeper or intended meaning of the Scriptures nor the intent of its writer. As we read the Pauline Epistles, it become glaringly clear that Paul displays his disappointment in wanting to give his followers a deeper Pneumatic teaching but finding them carnal, he cannot. Hence, the Gnostic Paul can only give them the most elementary and basic of Christian doctrines since they are not initiated into Christ. Instead of strong meat, or pneumatic teaching, the Gnostic Paul has to given then Sarkic (fleshly) dogma diluted down to a literal or historical rendering, otherwise know as the "milk" of the word which is equivalent to a 3rd grade level of reading of the Sacred Scriptures. Such a diluted and diminished presentation of Spiritual truth when rendered only in a literal and historical perception of the texts, only provided for its hearers moral and ethical lessons, omitting as it does, Spiritual manna for the evolution of the evolving Souls of mankind in their incarnated Earthly lives. Thus we see, there exists two levels of reading and understanding within the St. Paul Epistles, a process that is complicated by untold numbers of textual forgeries and interpolations at the hands of both the earlier Petrine Jerusalem Chruch, themselves the original literalizers and false historicizers of the "Christ Story" and "Jesus Story," as well as the later Roman Church Fathers and their monks who wish to conceal and veil, as did the Jerusalem congregation before them, the Gnosticism of St. Paul, the apostle to the non-Jews of the known world in his day.**

**Let us never forget that there are two levels in which the "Jesus Story" and the "Christ Story" is to be understood. We all begin to read the "Jesus Story" as if it is a literal and**

**historical story. The literal and historical interpretation of the "Jesus Story" is compared in Scriptures to the "milk" of the Word. This infantile reading of a mystical and metaphysical Cosmic drama of the Soul that progressively evolves into a deeper Spiritual level of understanding and interpretation of Scripture, is later compared to "strong meat" in the Scripture. Historical and traditional Roman Christian exegesis of the gospels and Pauline Epistles has for 1,800 years resulted in only a literal and historical understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures and texts, hardly ever obtaining or experiencing an allegorical, mystical, or metaphysical interpretation of the Scriptures and texts. This means that as Christians, we have been led our whole lives to drink Spiritual "milk" intended for babies in Christ and never once been fed on the "strong meat" that God intended we partake during out adult lives. In so doing, we have never progressed to the true Spiritual depth of what the Gnostic Paul attempted to convey to the Gentile Churches like the Church in Corinth to which he preached. To lives our lives, never obtaining the deeper teachings of the Word of God is not the way God intended for our Souls to evolve, nor the way delineated in the Scriptures that we are to obtain Spiritual maturity. As all of nature evolves and matures, only to be reborn anew, so it is with humanity and its understanding of Sacred Scripture as well. As a child, we are given the "milk" of a literal and historical understanding of the Scriptures in the Bible. This is necessary for babies, but not the intended goal for physical maturation. Nor is it the intended goal of Spiritual maturation and evolution as well. This very same Bible tells us in I Corinthians 2: 14 that its Scriptures are to be "Spiritually discerned" or "pneumatically discerned." God never intended that we remain our whole lives Spiritual babies, never progressing beyond a carnal approach to life nor never progressing from a literal or historical understanding of the Bible and its Scriptures. We were not incarnated into this Earthly life to never progress beyond a 3rd grade level in our comprehension of the Scriptures.**

**With the above as a short introduction to the Paul Problem in the New Testament, a fuller exposition of the problem is necessary and mandatory before we proceed with this website. Let it be known that before we can reveal the true Paul and his Gnostic gospel and teachings concerning the indwelling Christ as opposed the false Paul of Rome's invention associated with a supposed literal and historical Jesus Christ in the New Testament, owing to the numerous forged Scriptures attributed to the false Paul at the hands of both the Petrines of Jerusalem and later Rome, we must possess the truth of the history of the early Jerusalem congregation and the Gnostic Paul who wrote seven authentic Gnostic Epistles in the New Testament which never taught a literal and historical Messiah-Christ as the later forged Epistles of Paul will be made to appear and endorse. To this true St. Paul, the apostle to the Gnostic Christians, we now turn as we confirm from the discoveries of the Gnostic Christian texts at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, that in the first century of the Christian era, the term “Gnostic” denoted a heterodox segment of the diverse new Christian community. Among early followers of Christ it appears there were groups who delineated themselves from the greater household of the Petrine Jerusalem Church by claiming not simply a belief in Christ and his message, but a "special witness" or revelatory experience of the divine. It was this experience or gnosis that set the true follower of Christ apart from those associated with the Jerusalem congregation and men like Peter, James, and John. These Christians held a conviction that a direct, personal and absolute knowledge of the authentic Spiritual and metaphysical truths of mankind's existence is accessible to all human beings, and, moreover, that the attainment of such mystical knowledge regarding mankind's true reality must always constitute the supreme achievement of human life. Again, due to the most difficult task of deconstructing and dismantling the Apostle Paul before your eyes with what comes later in this Website, it is of the greatest importance that we see through the deception and lies fed us about the supposed Paul in the New Testament through textual forgery and dishonesty with the New Testament's texts. Only by exposing what is not true, can we repent of erroneous beliefs, and come to the knowledge and belief in what is true.**

**WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO STUDY THE PAUL PROBLEM WEBSITE**

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**Now, being full convinced that there exists a second Paul in the New Testament, we move on to the other Paul problem in the New Testament; namely, contrasting the message of the Romanized Paul as contrasted with the message of Christ. According to the traditions of ant-Gnostic Roman Christianity, Jesus Christ was supposedly a historical charismatic prophetic figure from Galilee. St. Paul, according to this same anti-gnostic tradition of Roman Christianity, is a Greek-speaking intellectual and letter writer who was made at many places in the New Testament the supposed promoter of a literal and historical Jesus Christ to the non-Jewish populations of the world. As we have seen, however, having done the study above, we have come to clearly see that the anti-gnostic Paul and anti-gnostic Christ was not the the real Christ nor Paul of history. This fact brings into question the reliability of the gospels and messages put into the mouths of both Paul and Jesus by Rome in the New Testament texts which they presented to the world. We must now take interest in the various different gospels presented in the New Testament, especially the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is characterized against the gospel of the anti-gnostic Paul of Rome's theological imagination.**

**With the discoveries of the Nag Hammadi Library, a collection of thirteen ancient Gnostic codices containing over fifty texts in upper Egypt in 1945 and their final translation in the 1970's, a major re-evaluation of early Christian history as well as the figure of both Paul and Jesus in the New Testament has been called for by both Bible scholars and researchers alike. These scholars tell us that the very nature of the early Church and Christ as presented by traditional Roman Christian exegesis of the New Testament as well as supposed traditional Roman Church history needs a complete reevaluation given that we see today, like never before, that it was Gnostic Christianity that comprised the earliest expression of Christianity and not Roman Christianity as we have been led to believe. We must come to grips with abundant textual forgery in the New Testament, as well as the mountains of deception that exists in the New Testament, all of which was intended to promote Roman Christianity over Gnostic Christianity. With the Nag Hammadi discoveries and its texts, new perspectives and questions have arisen that has brought forth varying and different responses to similar questions asked before these more recent discoveries of these Gnostic Christians texts and gospels. The old answers given us by Roman Christianity do not work today. In fact, given what is to be learned from the Nag Hammadi Gnostic scrolls alone, today's answers to these older questions not only challenge, but overthrow all of the ancient understandings of the nature of Christ, the identity of St. Paul in the New Testament, and Christian history, which we see clearly today, has been deceptively presented to the masses by Rome over the last 1,800 years. At the heart of the Pauline Problem is the mischaracterization of the Gnostic Paul's message which was addressed above, but the substitution of a false Pauline message put into the mouth of Rome's Paul that contradicts**

**not only the the message of salvation by the Gnostic Paul long before the rise of Roman Orthodoxy, but the gospel message of the New Testament Christ as well. Rome has "another gospel" which has replaced both the Gnostic Paul's gospel and the gospel of Christ as well. Let us not forget the unforgettable words of the Gnostic Paul in Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."**

**What was the relationship between St. Paul and Christ, and was the St. Paul of the New Testament always a true follower of Jesus, or did he at times oppose what Jesus taught? Did the Paul of the New Testament given us by Rome teach the same gospel and Spiritual message as "the Christ" in the New Testament? Or, do we find in the New Testament a completely different and opposing teaching and salvation message from Rome's anti-gnostic Paul which makes us think that we have a "Romanized Paul" on our hands in many places which often contradicts and opposes the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament? Could the fraudulent misrepresentation of the true Gnostic Paul by Rome be the reason for the numerous contradictions and Scriptural alterations we find in the New Testament supposedly from the pen of this St. Paul? Could it be the culprit here is Rome and their anti-Gnostic Paul and not the true Gnostic Paul of history? Why do we find two different opposing and conflicting gospels and Spiritual messages that supposedly came from this same "one" person named Paul in the New Testament? Could this be why the New Testament Paul appears theologically schizophrenic in the New Testament and in teaches often in opposition to Jesus in many of the things that he taught and said? Could it be that the "true Paul" was more of a Gnostic and "metaphysical" believer that taught a Spiritual gospel in agreement with the message of the Christ and it is the anti-gnostic Paul of Roman creative theology that is the false Paul who opposes the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament? Is it the anti-gnostic message of Rome and their false St. Paul which opposes the teachings of Jesus and not the message of St. Paul found in the unforged texts in his seven authentic Gnostic Epistles? Is the message of the anti-gnostic Paul of Rome's creative genius a forgery and outright example of the ingenious invention of Scriptural texts? Could it be that the Romanization of the Gnostic Paul is the reason for the alterations and purposeful changes made to the New Testament and Paul's Gnostic texts? Could this textual forgery by Rome of the New Testament gospels and the Gnostic Paul's Epistles be the real reason for the foundation and creation of a new and competing world religion that comes to be called Christianity, a religion that opposes almost all of what Biblical Judaism stood for and taught along with what the Gnostic Christians also taught?**

**It is commonly assumed by most Christians who are only remotely familiar with the Bible and its texts, carrying the Bible as they do to Church and using it usually only one hour a week, that St. Paul's relationship to the message of Jesus as the Christ was one of a faithful follower. Not being familiar with extra-biblical history, and possessing the keys that open the Bible's texts mystically and metaphysically, they make the erroneous assumption that St. Paul was very interested in the life and teaching of a supposed historical Jesus of Nazareth. Most Christians assume that St. Paul held Jesus of Nazareth in the highest regard and tried to base his own life and teaching on what he knew of this Jesus. Such is not the case. Could such an idea and assumed picture of the historical St. Paul and the inherited normal "tradition" and "testimony" regarding the St. Paul of the New Testament be fraudulent today? Has the New Testament faithfully committed down through the ages the testimony of the Petrine Jewish Church of Jerusalem as they knew and understood St. Paul, or could the story and truth regarding the true St. Paul have been purposefully altered by the Petrines and later by Rome to make St. Paul the hero of Gentile Christianity and the promoter of a literal and historical Jesus when the truth of the matter is that he was not? Arthur Drews in his The Christ Myth maintains that the historical Paul did not know of a historical Jesus who would have supposedly lived only twenty years before his time. Arthur Drews maintains that the historical Paul, in this case not the Gnostic Paul, but the later Romanized Paul, invented the whole Christian faith by Judaizing the whole Adonis cult. Other modern scholars like R. Bultmann stated that the St. Paul was only interested in the death and resurrection of Jesus and therefore shows no knowledge of a supposed historical Jesus prior to his death. Bultmann in such a comment refers to the true Gnostic Paul. In other words, the supposed Earthly life and preaching of Jesus played no role or importance with Paul. The historical Paul never saw or heard of a literal or historical Jesus. What the historical St. Paul knew about Jesus depended either on reports and formulated traditions or on his immediate experience with the Lord through a vision. There were no written gospels in Paul's day. The collection of "sayings" of the Lord from Ancient Egypt, called the *Logia of the Lord*, became attributed to Christ long before the time of Paul's birth. These "sayings" in Paul's day attributed to Jesus, now called (Q) which were used by the later Gospel writers Matthew and Luke, mattered little to the Gnostic Paul. It appears that Paul says almost nothing about the crucifixion of a historical Jesus, only that it occurred. He never tell us that this crucifixion and resurrection was a historical event. In fact, it appears from his writings that these events were meant to be interpreted metaphysically. allegorically, and Spiritually than literally or historically. None of the details regarding a literal or historical crucifixion or resurrection of Jesus can be found in the authentic Pauline Epistles. None of the details that appear in the later four gospel accounts are ever found mentioned by the Gnostic Paul in his authentic Epistles. Since I Thessalonians 2:14-16, where the Jews are blamed for the crucifixion of a historical Jesus is an interpolation and a later addition to the Pauline Epistles by Rome, then we cannot say that Paul blamed either the Jews or the Romans for the crucifixion. This makes sense if the crucifixion of Christ is mystical, not literal or historical. According to 1 Corinthians 2:8, those who "crucified the Lord of glory" were the "rulers of this age," itself a reference to the invisible malign principalities and powers that were at work in this Cosmic event regarding the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ and Divine Mind in "matter," i.e., humanity. When Paul mentions "Christ, our paschal lamb" in I Corinthians 5:7, he probably reflects knowledge that Christ's death occurred Astronomically during the Passover at the Vernal Equinox, but gives no further information about the event itself. It was again at this Vernal Equinox that the Sun passed over the "cross" in the sky as it rained own its life-giving rays and energy to Mother Earth and all of its life forms. Paul never describes the Lord he saw, nor does hid ever mention a empty tomb. Nor does the list of appearance stories in 1 Corinthians 15 coincide with the appearance stories in the later gospels. Anything that this Gnostic St. Paul knew of a historical Jesus before the crucifixion is exceedingly difficult to determine, because all we know is what St. Paul mentions in his Epistles. It is a given that the Pauline Epistles would mention that Jesus is a Jew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a son of David, and born under the law. These are not historical facts, but rather concepts attributed to every Jewish child born in Israel. More interesting for our concern is the fact that St. Paul never mentions Jesus' virgin birth, his historical baptism by John, nor any of the deeds of Jesus' Earthly ministry or presumed miracles, a literal crucifixion, a literal burial, a literal resurrection, and a literal ascension. If we only had Paul's litters, we would never know that Jesus Christ told parables or that his message was centered upon the news of the kingdom of God. Paul never mentions Jesus' teaching. This remarkable absence of Jesus' teaching and sayings from St. Paul's letters and the total neglect of his Earthly ministry and limited references to his passion are the causes of concern for New Testament believers. Modern scholars are slowing coming around in our day to admit that St. Paul, in truth, the Gnostic Paul, was not interest in "the historical Jesus." This view, advocated already by Albert Schweitzer, was developed especially by Rudolf Butlmann who saw Paul's theology is neither an extension nor an elaboration of Jesus' own message. This is not surprising, given as we have seen that much of the characterization of St. Paul in the New Testament comes to us from Petrine and later Roman textual forgery, addition, and substitution of the Bible's texts. For that reason, the**

**message and teachings emanation from the Romanized Paul of textual forgery, is shown to have a completely different message than did the teachings and messages emanating from the mouth of the Gnostic Paul as well as Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Due to the abundant textual manipulation and forgery in the New Testament, Jesus' words along with the teachings of the Gnostic Christ did not come to comprise the bulk of the message of the New Testament and the Pauline Epistles. At the center of our current study, when the message of Jesus' words are put under the microscope of critical scrutiny, they are found to differ considerably from what the later Romanized St. Paul would teach and say in the New Testament. The gospel of St. Paul the Gnostic and the gospel of Jesus are, when compared to the gospel of the Romanized Paul in the New Testament, found often at odds, conflicting, and contradicting. In other words, again we find "another gospel" put into the mouth of the Romanized and forged St. Paul that is quite different from the complementing gospels first taught by the Gnostic Paul as well as gospel taught by the New Testament Christ when personified as Jesus. Together the present the complete divinization of mankind; the internal transformation of mankind into Christlikeness, first within, then the outward expression of this Christlikeness through obedience to the Torah and good works detailed in the mitzvoth. This explains why the Gnostic Paul was not interested in a "fleshly Christ," that is, a historical Christ of misinterpreted Scriptures as seen with the Petrines of Jerusalem. Nor would he have been interested in a later one by Orthodox Roman Christianity as well. .**

**Most Christians are unaware that the traditional inherited Chistianized picture of St. Paul has not gone unchallenged down through Church history. Indeed, in recent years quite a different view of St. Paul has come to the forefront of modern Biblical studies. Far from meekly being a follower of Jesus as the Christ, it has been and it suggested by many scholars of high repute, that St. Paul in the New Testament, or the Romanized Paul of Roman creative theology, was a religious innovators who brought into a Gnostic expression of Christianity all sorts of ideas and emphases that complicated and spoiled original Gnostic Christianity as it existed as far back as the Essene Christians. This view of the Romanized St. Paul has been put forth forcefully to the masses over the centuries by many who, throughout history, have enforced a religious agenda instead of the truth concerning St. Paul, a truth that the vast majority of Christendom today does not even know exits. I, as well as many other scholars, have located personally and collected vast amounts of information that has been amassed over the centuries that reveals a completely different perspective on this St. Paul who is the "apostle to the nations" and Christianity. If you begin a comprehensive study into this area of Christian history, and have the ability to go beyond the "spin doctoring" by Christians religious authorities over the ages, you can find "Earth shattering evidence" that brings the traditional Orthodox Christian understanding of St. Paul crashing to the ground. The many "true followers of Jesus" as well as scholars throughout history who have concealed the truth about St. Paul have in our day come together in a unanimous conclusion that informs the interested reader that many of the "unhealthy" and "unpleasant" aspects of Christianity "find their origin in the Romanized Paul." Among the things for which this Romanized Paul may be held partly responsible are negative attitudes toward women, sexuality and the human body, and of course the Jews. But, I must ask: "Is this the true Paul, or a false presentation of him through textual forgery?**

**The fullest and most forceful scholarly presentation of St. Paul over the last few years was by a well known Jewish scholar called Myam Maccoby. In his significantly entitled book The Mythmaker: Paul and the Invention of Christianity, Hyam Maccoby concluded that it was Paul, or should I say the Romanized Paul, who founded Christianity as we know it today and as it is found expressed in the New Testament today. This Romanized Paul is shown to be the invention of textual forgery and manipulation, so much so, as it gave Roman creative genius to craft for themselves the type of Christianity that they wanted and would later enforce upon the ignorant masses. Notice if you will, Christianity as it exists today could never be considered the birth-child of the Gnostic Paul, only the Romanized Paul. As well, as we will come to see when we contrast the gospel message of Jesus when contrasted with the gospel message of the Romanized Paul, Christianity in the world, for the most part, does not follow the message and teachings of Jesus, it follows the teachings of Roman and Protestant Christianity instead. Hyam Maccoby stated in his book that it was Rome that overhauled and worked-over St. Paul, and in so doing, we obtain the Paul of the anti-Gnostic Epistles and with him, a completely separate and different Spiritual message that is unlike that formerly preached and taught by the Gnostic Paul as well as the Christ in the gospels.**

**Let me stop right here and recommend for all interested readers that there is probably not a more earth shattering expose on the truth about the Apostle Paul and his transformation in altered Scripture ever done to my knowledge than Maccoby's book and I personally consider Hyam Maccoby's The Mythmaker: Paul And The Invention Of Christianity a "must read" for anyone wanting to know the truth behind this anti-gnostic transformation of the Gnostic Paul into the Romanized Paul in the New Testament Scriptures. This book will show you the battle of not only the competing messages in the Bible between the gospels of Jesus and the Gnostic Paul, but the Romanized Paul as well. If you would like to read and see for yourself the history of scholarly discussion of the Jesus and the 2 Pauls and the problems that these three figures present in the New Testament, then I strongly this book to you. This schism between Peter and Paul, the Petrines and the Paulines, the anti-Gnostics and the Gnostic Christians, is traceable all the way back to F. C. Baur, the influential nineteenth-century Tubingen scholar, who postulated a major divergence in the early Christian Church church between the Jerusalem apostles (the Petrines) and Paul (the Paulines).**

**It is not only scholars who have argued these things in Scripture. Many ordinary Christians, as well as non-Christians, have found Paul extremely difficult to read and understand, and feel that Christianity would be very much better off without some of the dogmas that "he propounds (e.g., the divinity of Jesus and Jesus' death as a blood sacrifice), not to mention his teachings on sex, women, and slaves. They would be quite happy if we could keep Jesus, but quietly lose Paul. I can add my own personal testimony of finding the same as I began a serious study of Paul many years ago and I uncovered what many before me had found existing "outside the New Testament." It never ceases to amaze me how the hundreds of different pieces of evidence, manuscripts, books, archeological evidences, and facts that exist that expose the Pauline Problem have been kept from the general populace, and in their place, we find "one book" whose forgeries are so profound as to gloss over such a theological dispute to the degree than the normal reader can read these texts and Scriptures never noticing this great division and chasm separating Gnostic and anti-Gnostic, Pauline and Petrine Christianity.**

**So was the Gnostic Paul or the anti-Gnostic Paul the real Paul of the New Testament? Which of these Pauls are we to follow and believe when they teach on the Christ: Rome's anti-Gnostic Paul that follows the Petrines of Jerusalem and Rome with their literal and historical Jesus Christ and interpretation of the Scriptures, or the Gnostic Paul and the**

**early Gnostic Christians with their indwelling Christ along with their allegorical, mystical, and metaphysical interpretation of the Scriptures? Should we expect the Gnostic Paul with his Gnostic writings to be a a faithful follower of a supposed literal or historical Jesus of Nazareth as taught by the Jerusalem Church and the later Roman literalizers of Scripture? Is this why the St. Paul of the New Testament never writes of a supposed Human Jesus or ever mentions his supposed virgin birth or Earthly ministry? Or, should we expect the Gnostic Paul to oppose such a false and denounce several of his churches who were falsely misled by the false Jerusalem apostles which misunderstood the Scriptures and taught "another gospel" of a literal and historical Christ-Messiah that was limited to but one person by the Petrines of Jerusalem and later with Rome? What should the later Scriptural forgery and alteration of the Gnostic Scriptures by the Petrines, along with their later additions to the Gnostic Scriptures called interpolations, as well as their deletions of the Gnostic Scriptures in various places, teach us about who had the truth about the Christ, so much so, that out of desperation, the opposing camp, the Petrines of Jerusalem and later by Rome, had to resort to forging, adulterating, tampering, adding to and taking away from the Holy Scriptures in order to deceive the people as to what was, in their opinion and interpretation of Scripture, the truth about the Christ? Could God be pleased with such deception and destruction of His prior revelation to mankind which has stood basically unchanged for almost 10,000 years or longer? Was the real Paul in the New Testament a Gnostic believer who only taught the indwelling Christ in mankind, and in so doing, denounced the literal and historical Jesus taught by Peter, James, and John, and is this the reason he was never accepted by them as a true apostle of Christ? Will a serious and hard-nosed study of the New Testament as well as consultation of evidence outside the New Testament, help us determine the answers to the above question? Will the conflicts and contradictions involved in the presentation of St. Paul in the New Testament help us come to see that we are not dealing with one person or one voice in the New Testament, but in reality, we are dealing with two voices in the New Testament; one Gnostic and one anti-gnostic? Will examination of the Romanized Paul where we come to discover and isolate historical impossibilities, contradictions among the teachings of St. Paul, opposing dogmatic perspectives from the same man, antagonistic theologies from this same Paul, as well as opposing and contradictory gospels be convincing to the point to make a truth-seeker to seriously look at the earlier St. Paul, the Gnostic, as being the true Paul of the New Testament and any other who brings a different Christ from which St. Paul preached and taught in the beginning of his ministry in the Book of Galatians and I Corinthians is the false gospel and false Christ, even if it is the more familiar gospel today which teaches a literal or historical Jesus Christ which the Gnostic true Paul could and would never teach?**

**Bet Emet Ministries is devoting this website to providing such evidence in hopes that the normative Christian can learn from it and make necessary adjustments in both his religious belief system as well as his conduct. It is not my purpose to hurt anyone or their faith, nor is it my purpose to unfairly judge St. Paul, but we must come to discern which of the two different Pauls, the Gnostic Paul or the Petrine's anti-Gnostic Paul, is speaking in these texts we read and which is the true message and which is "another gospel" which were warned not to accept. Truth in these matters if of the greatest importance and we must let the evidence from the authentic Epistles of Paul speak for itself, and not the textual forgeries and interpolations that only lead us away from truth. If you have the courage and strength for such a study, then the truths in the following articles will show you the Romanized Paul is the false Paul! This false Paul, this Romanized Paul, preaching as he does a Christ come in the flesh, is the false Christ! St. Paul cries out yet today to us heed his warning in 2 Cor 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Notice, the Christ is "in you," out apart from you, not outside of you.**

**After you complete and study through this website, your life will never be the same. I will warn you before hand that you will experience every emotion possible as your study this material regarding who is the true St. Paul and who is not. You will experience grief, tears, heart brokenness, anger, indignation, etc., as you finally, possibly for the first time in your life, come to the see how many untruths have been passed off to you as supposed truths that you accepted in blind faith in your previous Christian experience. When one is finished with this website and the facts and evidences presented in it, I strongly urge the student and reader, in order to balance out what he has been shown here (the the St. Paul presented in most of the Pauline Epistles in the New Testament is a falsehood and an untruthful representation of the true historical Gnostic St. Paul), then I strongly encourage you to investigate the Gnostic Paul in-depth in order to obtain a deeper truth behind what the Gnostic Paul originally taught concerning the evolution of the "Gnostic Christ" in you. This knowledge can be found on our other Website revealing the Secret Mysteries as well as the First New Testament website.**

**But first things first. Let us look at this "Romanized Paul" which we have been taught our whole lives as Christians and followers of "the Christ" and let us see how Rome has destroyed and altered the earlier Spiritual truths that the real historical Gnostic Paul believed which can be found existing in mystical Judaism. We trace in this website how the St. Paul taught the earliest Christians of the "Christ within" him. Later, Rome will come and create a Romanized Paul who is made to teach "a Christ without" and apart from mankind. This is the other gospel of which we were warned by St. Paul to avoid at all costs. We will come to see how the ancient religious and Spiritual allegories were understood not only by these ancients who were given them by God and how this Spiritual Revelation was understood by the Gnostic Jews like the Essene Christians as well as the earliest Gnostic Gentiles in the earliest centuries of the emerging Church, long before Rome will come and "literalize" all of the Ancient Wisdom and give it a fictitious historical time line in the creation of the historical "Jesus Story." In so doing, we will see how the earliest New Testament expressing these allegorical Divine truths is butchered by Rome and destroyed and how we end up with the forgery we have today entitled the "New Testament." Truly, there is nothing new in it, because if correctly read and interpreted, it is nothing more than the restatement of the Ancient Wisdom and the indwelling Christ/Divine Mind in mankind which the Gnostic Paul taught. Never let it be said that archeology and hard study are not our friends, because when coupled together, the truth always shines forth. Now let us be ruthless in our search for truth as we examine the Paul of the New Testament, and in so doing, see if the Paul we have been given in the New Testament by Rome can hold up under intense scrutiny, or if he is an invention of Rome's political and religious desires. If so, then, by default, the other St. Paul is the real one and this one is the Gnostic St. Paul. Truth has finally been found after a 2,000 year absence.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR “HOUSE OF TRUTH”

### HOW TO OBTAIN THE TEACHING CD FROM BET EMET MINISTRIES

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**Greetings from Pastor Craig Lyons**

**In response to your request for the CD that contains all of our published studies, sixteen websites on important areas of thematic studies "key" to proper interpretation of Christianity and the Bible as it exists today, then we ask that you consider a small donation to our ministry that allows us to continue to procure necessary materials to further studies in these important areas that archeology and Bible scholars today are bringing to our attention. I ask that you consider a minimum donation of $50.00 for literally my life's work, a work going on presently thirty years of devoted scholarly study into the true origins of the Christian faith. Along with the CD comes a 10 page detailed instruction as to how to approach these studies "in order" for there is a intended path and order in which they need to be studied and addressed for their maximum benefit to the student. It is rather like climbing the stairs of ancient Spiritual knowledge; you cannot get to the 16th step without successfully and properly traversing the first step and the steps in between and then in consecutive "order." This assures a constant and progressive evolution of Spiritual thought. This "order" in your study of the CD is critical if one is to build upon new knowledge and follow the studies one step at a time and not get "lost" or overwhelmed by so much "new information." So often we read the end of the book first and get confused or just quit, or worse, we get scared about what we learned or read that might contradict what we have been told to believe in blind faith, not knowing how we get there. At times, most difficult "conclusions" can be made less painful when we slowly take these steps and journey into new information and knowledge in a step-wise progression. Thus, sequential thought is a vital necessity in order to trace the evolution of, and at times, departure from these Ancient Divine Spiritual Truths that all mankind were given in the beginning of Creation, truths concerning our Creator and Christ, truths held sacred for over ten thousand years before the rise of Roman orthodoxy with its "literalism" which destroyed and radically reinterpreted everything people believed about God. Today we are so far from this One Truth, this "faith once given the saints," and such a condition is a crying shame and the fruit of the world, especially in our country which prides itself of being a Christian nation, speaks of such a departure from the Creator's will for mankind. I am sad to report that Christianity is mainly to blame, in fact, for over the last 1,800 years Rome and its Christianity has sadly been a leading culprit and the greatest sinner in this tragic departure from Divine Truth. Today, living in this Information Age, there is hope for your "return" to "the" Faith once given the Saints and this CD will show you exactly what we have "lost" and how we are to "recover it all."**

**If you would like to obtain this CD with instructions then please respond prayerfully with your gift of $50.00, either by check made out to Craig Lyons, or by PayPal to my email address, bennoah1@verizon.net, for this abundant truth that will not only change your life as never before, but reveal your incarnational purpose. I ask that you respond as the LORD lays on your heart to:**

- **Craig Lyons Ms.D., D.D., M.Div.**
- **902 Cardigan**
- **Garland, Texas 75040**
- **Cell: 972-480-7192**


**Let us never forget that the Word and Truths of our God are not bound. Please share this knowledge you are learning with others for we are moving into a new age of awareness in a Cosmic sense; it is time for mankind to take their next step in the evolution of their Spiritual consciousness as we strive to become one with the Divine ONE Himself. And this cannot happen without truth and knowledge. Remember, the only religion that God ever gave man was TRUTH!**

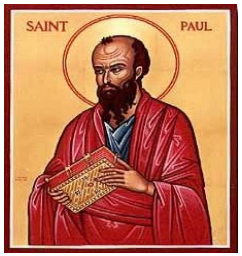
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




### SUMMARY OF THE PAUL PROBLEM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**Not only with the Book of Acts do we encounter problems associated with the presentation of Paul in the New Testament, but the letters associated with Paul in the New Testament present problems because there are such fundamental differences among them that most scholars are convinced that some of the Epistles attributed to Paul cannot have come from Paul although they might appear that way or Church tradition has associated them with Paul. There is today virtual unanimity that the following Epistles of Paul are authentic: Romans, 1, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, I Thessalonians, Philemon. However, there is almost equal agreement among scholars that the Pastorals (1, 2 Timothy, Titus) are not genuine Pauline Epistles. As well, there is almost equal scholarly agreement that the Book of Ephesians, although having some Gnostic Pauline teachings in it, is not of Pauline authorship. Scholarly opinion is divided over Pauline authorship of the Book of Colossians and 2 Thessalonians. If the seven letters of Paul are genuine, then any interpretation of Paul that restricts itself to them can be assured to rest on solid ground. The more a person relies upon what is said in the other letters associated with Paul, the less secure is the interpretation we obtain of Paul. It is important to note that theological differences within the genuine letters of Paul must be accounted for on a basis other than evolutionary development in Paul's thinking. Whoever wants to read the seven undisputed letters of the true Paul in order in which he wrote them must rearrange their sequence as given in the New Testament today. Thus, the message of the real Paul is not self-evident in the New Testament because different "Pauls" are to be found in the New Testament along with different theologies expressed by each. This has been termed by many scholars today the "Pauline-Petrine problem" or split in early Church history as well as the New Testament. When one pierces beneath the false Paul to see the true Gnostic Paul where he comes to understand his gospel, then and only then can one come to realize that St. Paul did not belong to the apostles of the first foundation of Christianity, but that he was charged with the apostolate of the first historical growth and expansion of Christianity into a universal character as the religion of the whole human race.**

**To understand better the true Paul of these "two Pauls" in the New Testament, it is necessary to see that the New Testament incorporates alternate interpretations of the gospel. It is paramount for the student of Scripture to recognize that there were two types of Christianity that were developing in the first century of the Common Era. The Christianity that developed in Jerusalem differed markedly from the gospel and Christianity of St. Paul. The modern study of St. Paul actually began in 1830 when F. C. Baur, the founder of the earliest Tubigen School, published his celebrated essay on the opposition between Petrine and Pauline Christianity in the early church. The Tubigen Schools were a group of German Protestant New Testament and Church history scholars, especially at the University of Tubigen which were led by F. C. Baur (1792-1860 C.E.). These Protestant scholars analyzed the development of early Christianity, and according to their analysis, there was in the Church, from the earliest times, a proto-typical struggle between, on the one hand, legalist, Jewish-Christian, proto-Catholicism and, on the other, a party that emphasized the spiritualizing and universalistic import of the message of the liberation from the law. It**

**is Paul's role as the Gnostic theological exponent of the universal significance of the life and death of Christ against a Judaizing party in the Corinthian Church which comes to Bauer's attention in his first source-critical study in New Testament literature. F. C. Baur maintained, on the basis of both of the Corinthian letters, that Paul at Corinth was charged by the Judaizing adherents of Peter with not have been a disciple of Jesus whom they taught. F. C. Baur also discovered the same opposition of these Petrine Christians to Paul in other Pauline letters and in the Church, but also drew attention to later tendencies to gloss over the differences between these two different gospels in the Book of Acts written rather late. Different diplomatic attempts were made in the first half of the second century to bring the two parties into harmony: the Epistle to the Hebrews is one; the Gospel of St. Luke, written to counteract the Jewish tendency of Matthew, another; and the Book of Acts, a third party-work in the Pauline interest: the "Clementine Homiles" supported the opposite side. We are indebted to one of these forgeries for the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and a part of the Epistle to the Romans. The Gnostics, who continued what Paul had begun, at last gained the upper hand over the Ebionite Petrines, and it was thought expedient by the Catholics to bring out a last concluding novel, under the venerable name of John the son of Zebedee, who was said to have lived at Ephesus down to the very end of the first century. This novel appeared as the Gospel of St. John about the middle of the second century, with a view to producing a general union, and building up the Catholic Church by the combination of a tame Gnosticism applied to a mythicized Christ. The writer exhibited considerable genius in counterfeiting John of the Apocalypse: the effect was striking. About the same time, that noted emissary of the Jewish party, Hegesippus, whom they had sent all over the world to collect materials in their favor and compose a history of the Church in the hierarchical Petrine sense, went so far as to represent the Apostle St. Paul as the first of the Gnostic heretics.**

**The work of F. C. Baur and the Tubigen School has been characterized as the first systematic study of these two opposed groups within early Christianity, the anti-Gnostic Petrines and the Gnostic Paulines. Given that St. Paul, a Gnostic, possessed a gospel given to him by revelation of "the Christ," itself being a universal gospel intended for all mankind instead of limited sectarian gospel like that of the Judaizers in Jerusalem, it is understandable why the most rigid Jewish Christians rejected Paul's gospel, and persecuted him; and the later Ebionites loaded his memory with scorn, as an errorist and a heretic. The Ebionites, moreover, have caricatured the portrait of the Apostle Paul in the most shameful manner, and stamped him with the likeness of a heresiarch due to their racial bigotry. But was the Gnostic gospel a heretic's gospel when it is seen to be a restatement of the indwelling Christ and divinity within all of human kind as was taught in the Ancient Wisdom religions as far back as recorded time, or was the new literal and historical interpretation of the Gnostic gospel the real heresy?**

**Due to the ground-breaking work of F. C. Baur, other Bible scholars came to see that the apostolic period was dominated by a tension between Jewish Christianity led by Peter and a gentile Christianity led by St. Paul. So heated were the disagreements between Paul and the Jerusalem Church that Paul had to contend with opposition even in his own Churches he established, especially in Galatia and Corinth. Traveling Judaizing preachers would follow him in his journeys and after Paul had left a city or mission field, they would attempt to undermine his work there by preaching anti-gnostic dogmas which contradicted what Paul, a Gnostic, had previously taught. Paul would calls these people "false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ" in 2 Corinthians 11:13. Long afterwards in the second century the Ebionites, a group of Petrine Jewish Christians and descendents from James' Church, hated Paul and called him their arch-heretic. Needless to say, this was not everybody's view as Paul established large followings everywhere he went among the Gentiles as his gospel was the restatement of the Ancient Wisdom of which they were already familiar, being that Paul's gospel was only the revised presentation of the Ancient Wisdom anew just in time for the dawning of the Age of Pisces. Even the friends of Paul struggled against his enemies but to some extent with each other for the rights of Paul's legacy. The Book of Acts, nonhistorical as it is, is the attempt of the Petrines Judaizers of Jerusalem to smooth over the split between Paul and his Paulines with James, Peter, and John and the rest of the Petrines after Paul's death. It was imperative for the success of Jerusalem Christianity to present a normative account of Paul where he was portrayed acknowledging and being acknowledged by the Jerusalem Church in order to make it appear as if these two great leaders of two different religions smoothed over their differences. They never did. Yet, in this false presentation of St. Paul in the Book of Acts, the book of the Church, Paul is depicted as a loyal Jew which is rather amazing, given an understanding of the tensions and circumstances that caused both theological camps to despise each other. Notice if you will, Paul, a Gnostic, is uncharacteristically made to have circumcised Timothy even though a Gnostic saw no benefit in religious rituals. Once there, Paul is said to have agreed to James' strategy in Acts 21:17-26 of showing that he was faithful to Judaism by observing the Nazarite vow that required blood sacrifices and atonement offerings, something rather strange 30 year after Jesus' supposed death that was supposed to be the final sacrifice for sins. Before the Sanhedrin, the Book of Acts makes Paul claim he is a Pharisee whose advocacy of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead divided the court in Acts 23:1-10, something rather strange again for a Gnostic who denied the physical resurrection of the body. Thus, the Book of Acts is loaded with pure fiction in these account, each of which are pieces of false history created by the Petrines in order to present Paul as an advocate of James and their Judaizing gospel. But what about Paul's gospel which denied everything that the Petrines falsely presented as applying to Paul that we have just mentioned that was taken from the Book of Acts? Does truth matter? What are we to do when the New Testament is full of deceptive depictions of the true Gnostic Paul?**

**Well, for one thing, it is not the Book of Acts account of St. Paul and the non-authentic Epistles that carry Paul's name we can trust; only Paul's personal Epistles and writings can be trusted to give us an accurate picture of St. Paul. At the heat of this schism and split lay the proper hermeneutic of the Scriptures; the Petrines expressing in Jerusalem a literal and historical interpretation of Christ-Messiah and the Scriptures, and Pauline expressing a mystical, allegorical, and metaphysical interpretation of Scripture. In other words, the interpretation of Scripture boils down to a battle between the gospels; Pauls and the one taught by the Jerusalem Church which believed in the coming of a historical Jesus as the Christ which never historically appeared and whose expected second coming to fulfill the Messianic Scriptures never occurred either by 70 C.E. when the Temple was destroyed and the Jews scattered as slaves throughout the known world. These debates over the proper interpretation of the Pauline writings is not new. It goes all the way back to New Testament times. For example, the letter of 2nd Peter 3:16 speak of St. Paul's writings and states that when reading them "some things are hard to understand" because those who are "unlearned" and "unstable" end up "twisting" the meaning of Paul's Epistles to their "...own destruction." What is it that we have to learn in order to properly understand St. Paul's writings where we do not follow in the former footsteps of those who misunderstood the authentic Pauline Epistles and letters?**

**Opposing Paul and his interpretation of his gospel he received in a vision from Jesus, Peter and his Petrine followers in Jerusalem believed Paul interpreted the Scriptures incorrectly. The Gnostic Christians, otherwise called the Paulines, had a completely different manner and method of interpretation of the Scriptures than the Petrines and believed**

**that the Petrines possessed an incorrect interpretation of the Scriptures. Let us set the record straight. The Gnostic Christians existed long before the rise of the Jerusalem congregation and Peter and his "Petrine" literalizers and Judaizers of the Scriptures. This debate over the Scriptures, as well as the Pauline Epistles, and their proper interpretation, either literally or historically as promoted by the Petrines in Jerusalem, or allegorically, mystically, and metaphysically as promoted by St. Paul and the Gnostic Christians, would never be settled. Hence, the Paulines were opposed not only by the Jerusalem Church with their literalizing and historicizing Petrines, but would equally opposed in the second century by the same literalizing and historicizing of the Scriptures by the emerging Roman Catholic Church. When reading 2 Peter 3:16 it is important to remember that the very presence of this Scripture in the New Testament declaring that the Pauline corpus of writings are difficult to understand is proof of the historical fact that St. Peter and the Gnostic Christians he was opposing not only supported, but appealed to the Gnostic St. Paul and his Gnostic teachings for their authority and their religious beliefs. Other Christians, the Jerusalem Petrines, however, came to have a great dislike for St. Paul as seen in the 2nd century Letter of Peter to James connected to the Pseudo-Clementine writings, where we find Peter calling St. Paul "his enemy." Long before the 2nd century, however, there existed even in the Churches that St. Paul founded opposition to St. Paul and his teachings and gospel. Even as early as St. Paul's first Epistle, the Epistle to the Galatians, there were men who thought St. Paul had erred greatly in suggesting that Gentiles did not have to become circumcised to belong to the people of God. At Corinth, one of the Churches that Paul founded, many in the Church thought Paul had only a rudimentary understanding of the Christian faith. Coupled with these events, Paul's ideas and gospel was for many considered dangerous because Pauline interpreters came away from reading St. Paul with a salvation message that man is made right with God "by faith alone, apart from works" when James had taught just the opposite, that man is made right with God "by works" which reveal his faith. Needless to say, Paul and his teachings produced a controversy everywhere he went. What is most strange is the fact that opposing religious groups in Israel with conflicting and contradictory religious beliefs in the first century both claimed St. Paul as their apostle and his teaching for the authority for their sect's religious beliefs. Seeing these opposing religious beliefs from various opposing sects in the first century, all of which looked to and claimed St. Paul for their religious authority, Biblical historians and modern Bible scholars began to ask what it was that St. Paul actually believed and taught in the first century. How did these opposing religious groups come to adopt St. Paul as their apostle and why does the two presentations of St. Paul in the New Testament along with his message contradict each other? Which of these two different Pauls in the New Testament is the real Paul? How do we know the difference between what really happened in the life of Paul and what has come down to us as pious legends?**

**We presently have thirteen letters that survive from the hand of St. Paul, a Gnostic Christian. These letters supply us with the basic historical facts and information from the apostle to the Gentiles. Modern scholars reveal to us in their writings why a number of writings that claim to be written by St. Paul were not actually written by him but are pseudepigraphical which is a fancy word for "forgeries." This applies to the other six Epistles that Church tradition assigns to the Gnostic Paul as well as extra-biblical writings outside of the New Testament. These spurious writings presuppose situations that are quite different from those that St. Paul faced while writings his Epistles around 50 C.E. to 60 C.E. These six letters that were from hands other than Paul which falsely carry his name today, have three problems for anyone trying to reconstruct what the truth about the historical St. Paul and what he wrote: Pseudepigraphy, Interpolations, and the Occasional Nature of the Epistles themselves.**

**When we address the problem of Pseudepigraphy, we have to determine which letters came from St. Paul and which did not if we ever hope to discern the truth about St. Paul and what he actually believed and espoused as his gospel in the first century. St. Paul mentions in his letters that many writings are circulating in the Churches in the first century that carry his name and are attributed to him, however, he denies authorship of all but those that he wrote with is own hand and signed personally. This is not a question of whether an early Christian might have forged letters in Paul's name and in so doing painted a false Paul for later readers. We know for certain that Petrine Christians were forging letters in Paul's name. We need look no further than 3rd Corinthians which attacks the Gnostic Christianity taught and espoused by St. Paul and which came into full bloom in the early to mid-second century long after Paul's death. Evidence suggests that even during the New Testament period there were other Christians with different interpretations of the Scriptures, primarily the Petrines of Jerusalem, that were forging Epistles to which they attached Paul's name. It goes without saying that these anti-Gnostic Petrines were trying desperately to undo what the Gnostic Paul was teachings on his journeys. Of course we know what the Gnostic Paul was teaching. The historical Paul taught the indwelling Christ in mankind. We know that Paul did not write 2nd Thessalonians, yet it appears at first glance, if you take it that Paul did write this Epistle, then Paul is made to say that he denounces those who wrote in his name that the day of Christ is at hand as we see in 2nd Thessalonians 2:2: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." In other words, the day of Christ is not today, or tomorrow, or soon. But this is not Paul, the Gnostic Paul admonishes his hearers that every day is the day of the awaking of Christ in mankind. It is not yet for an appointed time long in the future as we see with the strong Gnostic saying in the book of Ephesians which is undoubtedly written by a Pauline supporter in the Book of Ephesians 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." This is present tense, not something appointed to a future time. For Gnostic Christians like Paul, the day of Christ is every day! Yet, when Paul is mistakenly presented as the author of forged Epistles like 2 Thessalonians, he is made to say that the day of Christ is not at hand, but delayed for a future time. This is the work of Petrines the likes of which were influenced by Peter, James, or John. Hence, we should be greatly concerned that such forgeries made it into the New Testament, and in so doing, has mistakenly led us to consider Paul as an anti-gnostic when the facts of the matter is that he was a Gnostic Christian. Let us not forger that the New Testament did not come into being or canonized until centuries after the books of the New Testament. This gave Rome ample time to construct the final touches on the anti-Gnostic Paul that replaced the Gnostic Paul in the New Testament. The people who made these theological decisions concerning what was to be added to the Pauline Epistles as well as removed from them, let alone which made the decisions as to what to include in the final New Testament, were not academic scholars or literary detectives. Since those who made these decisions concerning the New Testament lived centuries after the books were written, they often had no means of gauging accurately whether the alleged author of the book destined for the New Testament was its real author. Today, we are blessed by modern scholars in this Information Age who have far more resources at their disposal for uncovering these ancient New Testament forgeries than the ancients two thousand years ago possessed. Of all of the Epistles attributed to St. Paul, only Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, I Thessalonians, and Philemon are believed to be authentic Pauline Epistles, and the rest anti-Gnostic forgeries. These other six Epistles differ theologically from these prior seven. Of course, if the real Paul was the author of the other six Epistles, then we should not expect to find such conflicts and contradictions in theology when these two sets of Epistles are contrasted and compared. We know for certain that these other six Epistles are not Paul's not only because of their anti-Gnostic tendencies, but the vocabulary, the writing style used, and historical situations expressed in them are quite different from that expressed in the earlier seven authentic Epistles of St. Paul. These other six Epistles, Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus reveal historical situations that arose long after St. Paul's death and appear to be written by later Petrine Christians that**

**altered earlier Epistles for theological advantage, or were penned in order to propagate the religious beliefs and views of either them personally, or the religious group to which they belonged or were affiliated.**

**Interpolations are a huge problem in the New Testament. We as Christians should be concerned because even the undisputed Pauline Epistles are shown to have interpolation or inserted anti-gnostic Scriptures inserted within them, the purpose of which it to falsely portray St. Paul as teaching a literal and historical Christ Jesus when in fact he never did nor did he ever believe in a historical Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Tampering with the authentic Pauline Epistles by later Roman Christians scribes and monks where they inserted anti-gnostic polemic in the authentic Gnostic Epistles of Paul where these kind of theological notations were not there only goes to prove the facts that Rome forged the New Testament before it was given to the masses. This interpolated theological additions to the Pauline authentic Epistles cannot be used to establish what the St. Paul himself actually said, taught, or believed. What these textual forgeries and untruths written into the New Testament documents by the Roman Petrines at this time, does however tell us what these later Roman Christians wanted their readers and masses of people to believer St. Paul thought and taught. Again, St. Paul, the real Paul, was a Gnostic and metaphysical believer in the Christ incarnated within mankind, out outside of mankind as the Jerusalem Petrines and later Roman Petrine Christianity would interpret the Scriptures to say.**

**The third problem posed by St. Paul's letters and Epistles in seeing what he taught and believed is that if you even restrict yourself to Paul's seven undisputed Epistles in their uninterpolated form, you need to realize that all of Paul's Epistles, except one, were occasioned by individual unique problems at various Churches that he had established in urban areas around the Mediterranean. None of these seven Pauline authentic Epistles are to thought of as systemtic treatises where Paul spelled out everything he thought was important upon the issue at hand. It is a sad fact that we only possess seven of Paul's writings out of all that he more than likely penned over several years. As it exists, we have a very restricted understanding of the Gnostic gospel he preached in these several undisputed Epistles. If we are ever to know more completely about who St. Paul was and his religious beliefs system, then we must undertake a comprehensive and serious investigation into Gnostic Christianity in the earliest centuries of Christianity and in so doing separate fiction and purposeful mischaracterization of Gnostic Christianity from the Church Fathers while at the same time we take an objective and thorough study of Gnosticism, its mythical and metaphysical perspectives in relation to the Soul of mankind.**

**There is one other early source for information on the life and teaching of St. Paul. The Book of Acts details accounts in the life of St. Paul, however, modern scholars inform us that many accounts in the Book of Acts are but legend passed off as supposed historical events. We are fortunate that places and events in Book of Acts detailing Paul's life and what Paul referred to in his own letters can be found in the Pauline authentic Epistles as well. That being so, it is a relative easy job to compare what the Book of Acts says about Paul with what Paul says about himself. What we find if we do such comparisons is very striking in that in almost every instance where such a comparison is possible, disparities, or should I say very large disparities, appear when these parallel accounts of Paul's life and teachings are compared. It is thus proven that the life of the Gnostic Paul has been altered along with events in his life down through the centuries as the accounts of Paul's life were retold over the next many decades. Modern scholars tell us that St. Paul and his authentic Epistles is a much better source from knowing the truth about Paul than the writer of the Book of Acts which is responsible for the many discrepancies between his writings and the authentic Pauline Epistles. This should strike us rather strange, given that St. Paul and Luke were believed to be close friends who accompanied each other of Paul's missionary journeys. The author of the Book of Acts, despite his claims that he wishes to present an "accurate" account, does not seem at all concerned to present a consistent and faithful portrayal of Paul's life. For example, there are three accounts in the Book of Acts describing Paul's awakening to Christ, called "conversion" in our Bibles. All three accounts agree with Paul's own account in his writings that before his conversion Paul was an avid persecutor of Christians. Based upon a vision of Jesus Christ Paul's life changed. What was this vision and what happened when Paul experienced it? Well, it depends on what part of the Book of Acts you read: chapter 9, chapter 22, or chapter, 26. If we begin with chapter 9, when Jesus appeared to Paul the texts says Paul's traveling companions "heard the voice but saw no one." If we turn to chapter 22 in the Book of Acts the text says the traveling companions "saw the light but did not hear the voice." What was it? In chapter 9:7 in the Book of Acts the traveling companions are said to left standing while Paul is knocked down by the vision, but in Acts 26:12 they all are said to have fallen to the ground. In chapter 9 Paul is told by Jesus to go into Damascus to receive instructions by a man named Ananias about what to do, however, in chapter 26 Paul is not sent to Ananias, but is rather instructed by Jesus himself. Why cannot Luke agree on these issues if he is the writer of all three accounts? If Luke was willing to change the story depending upon the context within which it is told, then why should we not assume that he did the same things all the way through the Book of Acts whenever he say fit to alter the accounts. And if he did that, how do we known when we are reading the Book of Acts, or the Bible for that matter, the story is as it happened?**

**Thus we see, the first gospel was preached by the Gnostic Paul and St. Paul is significant for our study not only because of who he historically was a historical figure of the first century, but also because he gave the Christian world the first gospel, called by him "my gospel." As well, St. Paul is of great significance because of how he was remembered in later centuries as legends sprang up about him, legends that were often assumed to be "gospel truth" by those who heard them and told them. Many of the stories about St. Paul in the New Testament are unfortunately not historically accurate. But this does not mean that they are unimportant. The people to retold these stories as well as those who heard them believed them to be accurate portrayals of the past. More often than not, modern scholarship today has shown most of these stories in the Bible about St. Paul, for example, as well as many others in the Bible, not accurate to the historical record. What is important, however, these legends about St. Paul, although not historically accurate or true, yet expressed the religious beliefs, concerns, values, and passions of those who created these stories and legends that they expressed in the age in which they lived. The people who told these stories about St. Paul did so not merely to convey objective facts about what had happened, but also because these stories meant something to them, their religious world view, or the religious view of the religious sect to whom they belonged. - whether the stories were, strictly speaking, historically accurate or not. On the opposite side, there exists others affiliated with opposing religious groups who told other stories about St. Paul which were just the opposite of what the former people and their particular religious group maintained about St. Paul. Thus, there are two different Pauls represented in the New Testament. Which is the true St. Paul and which is not? What is the truth of the matter? What am I to believe?**

**Modern historians have a two-pronged task ahead of them if they wish to obtain the truth about Paul as he is depicted by two different religious sects in the New Testament**

**writings: the Petrines and Paulines. On the one hand, modern historians and scholars today try to determine, to the best of their ability, what actually happened in the past. What did St. Paul really say, do, and experience? Should the Bible historian accept what is found in the New Testament in blind faith, or should he accept what is found outside of the New Testament as inaccurate? On what grounds? How do we separate legend and fabricated accounts from actual history in the Bible? Which of the ancient sources, the Petrines as found in the Jerusalem congregation and later Roman Orthodox Christianity, or the Paulines, as found in the earliest Gnostics and Essene Christians, have the truth regarding St. Paul? Should we take seriously the Book of Acts and what it has to say about St. Paul, or is the whole of it to be suspect and not above questioning since it appears to be in many places unreliable and untrustworthy to actual history?**

**These are just a few of the questions we face when trying to know what St. Paul was actually like, what really happened during his life, and what he believed about Jesus as Christ. Make no mistake about it, when involved in Bible studies knowing about the past matters. It is of the greatest concern that we obtain the facts about whether a historical Jesus actually existed and whether he followers, the Petrines, did the things that our sources indicate, of if the historical Jesus is a gross misunderstanding of the Ancient Scriptures where mystical and metaphysical doctrines hid from the masses were mistakenly interpreted as if literal and historical when in fact they were never meant to be. Hence, all Christians should do their best to know what happened in the past, especially in the battle between the Petrines and Paulines, and the false characterization of St. Paul by the Petrines in this theological battle over the interpretation of the Scriptures in the earliest centuries of Christianity. Hence, the importance of history and the separation of history from legend. What complicates such a study is that the ancients who passed down to us these traditions did not themselves often distinguish between historical fact and legendary imagination. Historical memories, later embellishments, legendary expansions, and pure fabrications and Scriptural inventions were all told, retold, and created because they related truths, beliefs, views, and ideas of Christians who created them, and in so doing, they expressed their views and understanding of the Scriptures. Hence, the religious conflict over the proper interpretation of the Scriptures raged over five centuries in Christianity. The Gnostic Christians, as well as the Essene Christians, who were influenced by St. Paul, viewed all Scripture as a pseudo-history and Spiritual allegory at best, the bulk of which was to be interpreted mystically, allegorically, and metaphysically. Opposing them later we find the emerging Roman Christians Church who follow in the footstep of the former Jerusalem Petrines who adopted the literal and historical approach to the interpretation of Scripture. Rome, unaware of the secrets of the Ancient Mysteries, continued the same Scriptural tradition.**

**We can, however, when reading these legends and stories in our Bible today, come to see what these ancient Gnostic religious truths, beliefs, views, and ideas actually were. Thus, our study of St. Paul will consider both the historical facts as well as the legendary embellishments and textual forgeries attached to the Petrine understanding of St. Paul (Jerusalem congregation/Roman Christianity with their literal and historical interpretation of Scripture). We will ask what we can learn from the literal and historical examination of these legends and see if they can hold up under scrutiny in determining if they are actual historical or literal accounts of St. Paul at all, or if they are fictional creations intended to diminish the trustworthiness of the former Gnostic presentation of St. Paul and his Gnostic gospel and Epistles. In so doing, we will be able by determine what is historical and what is not, what we can know about St. Paul for certain, what he actually did and believed, what he actually taught and did not teach, and how he lived. At the same time we will ask about the Paulines and the Petrines in order to determine which, if any, characterizations in the New Testament are legendary figures and not real historical people, even thought as legendary figures, these characterizations came to play important roles in the imaginations of the many who came to embrace Christianity in its earliest expression in the first century before the rise of the religion of the Roman Empire.**

**Let it be affirmed that few people have an interest in the past for its own sake. Instead, we are interested in the past because it helps us make sense of the present, of our own lives, our own beliefs, values, priorities, of our own world and our personal experiences in it. Thus, there is no such thing as a study of the past without relevance to the present. All of us who study the past, take St. Paul for example, are in fact interested in it for how it can help us think about ourselves and our lives. Which such a motive, let us examine and scrutinized the characterization of St. Paul in the New Testament. Let us separate historical fact and truth apart from legend and religious untruths. When we are finished, we can look at what is truth, discard the untruths, and come to a correctly understanding of the true St. Paul and his message to the Souls of mankind in the New Testament. Then, and only then, can our Souls benefit in their Spiritual evolution when they are feed the strong meat of truth.**

**So, how many different and conflicting theologies come from the pen of St. Paul of the New Testament? Can the real Paul be found in the New Testament? Was the first New Testament a collection of Gnostic Christian writings and did the real historical Paul teach only a non-human Christ Jesus and not a literal and historical Christ Jesus as we are accustomed today? Has the original writings of the earliest Gnostic Christians, the First New Testament, carrying on the Spiritual tradition of humanity since the beginning of time, been corrupted? Have the allegorical, mystical, and metaphysical understanding of the indwelling and evolving Christ and Divine Mind of God in mankind been corrupted by a false literalization, historicization, and Romanization of Christ where the doctrine of the indwelling Christ in mankind was transformed into a supposed human Christ limited to only one person? Has the doctrine and dogmas connected to the hoped for coming of a human deliver and human Messiah of the Jewish nation been merged and synthesized with the Ancient Wisdom and the incarnation of the Divine Spark in mankind as the "Krst/Christ"? Did the misinterpretation of the Ancient Wisdom cause the creation of a God-man Messiah by mistake and this epitaph was affixed to a Jesus of Nazareth by Rome? Have we believed in the wrong Christ given us by Rome through textual corruption, adulteration, interpolation, addition, subtraction of the Scriptures along with an in correct hermeneutic applied to the Scriptures? Have we inherited lies and deceptions from Roman Christianity regarding the true identity and message of St. Paul?**

**Today in the Western Hemisphere, if you are a Christian, then you most likely think that you have the truth concerning the Jewish Messiah let alone "the Christ" since being Spiritually reared most likely in either Catholicism or one of the many sects of Protestantism. In spite of a person's Christian upbringing today, few if any Christians are aware today that the earliest understanding of "the Christ" as well as the Jewish understanding of their Messiah has been corrupted, altered, and changed by the later emerging Roman Christian Church. What we are taught today as Christians to believe about "the Christ," and the "Jewish Messiah" today is completely different from what the earliest Christians believed about "the Christ" as well as the "human Jewish Messiah" in the first two centuries of the Christian Era. The best way to describe it is by saying a synthesis of these two very different religious and Spiritual ideas have come to be fused and mixed together, and in the process, the truth about both has been corrupted and destroyed from what they**

**earliest Essene and Gnostic Christians originally believed the Scriptures to mean? How can this be? What caused this to happen? Why have our beliefs about Christ let alone the Messiah of the Jews changed for Christians from what they always were when held Sacred by the Ancient believers in God during the earliest two centuries of the Common Era?**

**In other words, what we as Catholic or Protestant believers today have been taught to believe about Jesus and "the Christ" as filtered through the Roman Church in its earliest centuries is quite different from the earliest Gnostic Christian beliefs concerning "the Christ" as well as Jesus! Let me say that there is a reason why Judaism does not accept the Christian's Christ Jesus and its understanding of the Jewish Messiah. The reason is simple: We as Christians possess purposefully altered and forged Old and New Testaments in our Bible whose Scriptures and Scriptural quotes of the Hebrew Scriptures are not accurate to their rendering in the Jewish Tanakh and the Hebrew Bible. Thus, the religious beliefs based upon corrupted, mistranslated, and misquoted Scriptures are different today then they would be had we not inherited from Roman Christianity a Bible that had not been tampered with for at least five hundred years. This fact means one thing. Our religious beliefs, stemming as they do from the Christian Bible, are wrong in many religious areas, and we are not aware of it, nor are our religious establishment in Christianity today. You would have to ask a Bible scholar, or an archaeologist, or a linguist familiar with the Bible to obtain such specialized knowledge of the Bible, and men and women possessing these positions don't pastor Churches.**

**It is an undeniable fact of Bible study today that the New Testament handed down through Church history by the Church of Rome has totally mischaracterized and destroyed the earliest beliefs and understanding of "the Christ" let alone the Jewish Messiah by the Jews, who were by the way the earliest Christians. Few Christians are aware that the earliest Christians were not those of the Jerusalem Church, as we have been led to believe, but rather were the Essenes Christians who were mystical and metaphysical believers, not literalists nor false historicizers of Spiritual Scriptures. In fact, these earliest Essene Christians opposed the teachings of the Jerusalem Church as did the real St. Paul of the Bible. The Jerusalem congregation, in both the eyes of St. Paul as well as the Essene Christians, has lost their way by a perverse misunderstanding and misinterpretation of their own Hebrew Scriptures, especially when they had interpreted Spiritual allegory and myth in the Hebrew Scriptures to be literal history and prophecy of a coming God-man as their Messiah. Peter, James, and John, and the rest of those whom they influenced, taught a different Christ Jesus than did the Essene Christians and St. Paul and the conflict between them, called the "Petrine-Pauline Split," never healed, even up until the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 C.E.**

**The Jerusalem Church and congregation not only altered Scriptures themselves, but their hermeneutic and interpretation of their own Scriptures, separated themselves not only from the Sadducees, but from the Essene Christians as well. These supposed pillars in the Church were totally responsible for destroying the earliest understanding of "the Christ" and the Jewish Messiah for many Jews in the first century. Yes, I know, you have never heard this before because you are reading Scriptures that you have never personally traced out to their origins and compared for yourself what they originally said and what they later came to say when they fell into the possession of men who would later alter them. Yes, such information is more than likely a total shock to you; but that does not change the fact that it is the truth in spite of the other fact that you have never been told the truth of this matter. Living in the Information Age today, we are privy like never before to knowledge and evidence that proves beyond a doubt today that the earliest believers "the Christ" and the "Jewish Messiah," two different theological concepts, had a completely different understanding of "the Christ" and "Jesus" then as been taught to us today by our New Testaments as filtered through the Holy Roman Catholic forgery mill. How could this have happened? What did the "earliest Christians" actually believe about "the Christ,"? and why have I not been told the truth about this before now? Well it all began with a man named "Marcion" who was a Gnostic, which was the greatest threat to later emerging Roman Christianity because he taught only what St. Paul taught and believed to his dying breath that only St. Paul had the truth about "the Christ," and that the false apostles of Jerusalem grossly misunderstood the Hebrew Scriptures concerning their Messiah and the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom concerning the "Christ within" humanity.**

**When reading and studying this website, one will come into much challenging information that will be completely new to the seeker of truth. I assure you that the following details, facts, and information concerning the true historical Paul and the problem and the split with the Jerusalem Church is documented well outside the New Testament. I challenge every reader to do his own "homework" in order to verify to himself beyond any doubt that what I will be sharing with you is the truth and in order to make it easy for you I have presented a short bibliography where you can verify the facts in this website for yourself from the following scholarly sources. In the studies that follow, I will endeavor to point out the many problems that are connected to the New Testament's presentation of Paul, his true Gnostic religious beliefs, as contrasted with the anti-gnostic religious beliefs of Rome that has been put into the mouth of the false Paul by Roman monks when later inventing and altering existing Gnostic Scriptures, historical inaccuracies and outright purposeful misrepresentation of truths regarding the Gnostic Paul who is desperately made by Rome to appear as anti-gnostic as possible in order to falsely support their theology ideas and interpretation of Scriptures which opposed by the earliest Essenes Gnostic Christians as well as the Gnostic St. Paul himself. Only in this way, pointing out the many instances of untruth connected to the Paul of the New Testament which Rome gave, can we lift our heads eventually above the smoke and ruin of the true characterization of the Gnostic Paul fully persuaded that God had nothing to do with such a depiction of St. Paul in the New Testament, and that this anti-gnostic depiction of St. Paul is completely deceptive. Only then can we stand before God, knowing that our Father in Heaven knows that we now know these truths, can we be fully persuaded, never looking back to our religious traditions who yet try to hold us back from truth, and seriously look into the mystical and metaphysical understanding of Jesus as title and name given to "the Christ indwelling mankind," a Spiritual and mystical allegory for the incarnation of God, not in a solitary figure any longer, but the incarnation of God in you and me, an incarnation of divinity in us whose purpose if to awaken within us whereby God can live, move, and have His being in us, in order that God can live and evolve Himself in and through us as He enjoys the Creation that He make not only for Himself, but for us to evolve our very Souls into the "stature and fulness of Christ." Now, let us rediscover the truth about St. Paul, the Gnostic apostle to the Gentiles of the world and his message, and in so doing, separate the truth from the deception.**

**Home**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH

### SOURCES FOR YOUR STUDIES THAT REVEALS THE TRUTH ABOUT ST. PAUL

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**Within the pages of these books, we can once again obtain the truth long destroyed and hidden from mankind concerning St. Paul by those who manipulated history and the Bible for theological agendas. What I find to be sad and appalling is that those who wish and desire to be real followers of Christ have a chance if all they read their whole lives is the accounts in the New Testament since so much "adulterating and doctoring" of the Scriptural facts concerning the life of Paul and his Epistles have been done for centuries upon centuries. These courageous authors below have dedicated their lives to intense scholarly study whereby they have recovered long lost truths that selfish and antisemitic men have withheld from the people that they "religiously" manipulated throughout history. The men who gave us these "theological lies" and who so terribly mischaracterized the Gnostic Paul are dead but the fruit of their efforts remain and live on in textual forgeries and untruths that were penned in inserted at various places in the New Testaments. It is time to learn the truth about Paul because only in stripping away the lies and antisemitic religious agendas around him and his life can we hope to recover the truth about "the Christ" as well as the "Jewish Messiah" and thereby see the truisms concerning him. Only in restoring the truth concerning St. Paul, himself a Gnostic opponent of the Jerusalem literalizers and false historicizers of the Ancient Wisdom, can we ever hope of making intelligent choices regarding our religious beliefs, and accordingly, will our conduct and how we lives our lives in this life guarantee we live and die as "real" followers of "the Christ" and not as those who have unknowingly accepted "another gospel" and "another Jesus."**

**I strongly recommend reading the books in order as listed here as the better ones are listed from top to bottom.**

**H Maccoby, The Mythmaker: Paul and the Invention of Christianity, 1986.**

**Elaine Pagels, The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters, 1992.**

**Michael Goulder, St. Paul Versus St. Peter: A Tale of Two Missions, 1994.**

**H Maccoby, Paul and Hellenism, 1991.**

**Kenneth Schei, Christianity Betrayed, Synthesis, 1989.**

**Elaine Pagels, The Gnostic Gospels, 2004.**

**Leander E. Keck, Paul And His Letters, 1979.**

**Bart D. Ehrman, Peter, Paul, And Mary Magdalene, 2006.**

**Lillian C. Freudmann, Antisemitism in the New Testament, 1994.**

**Home**

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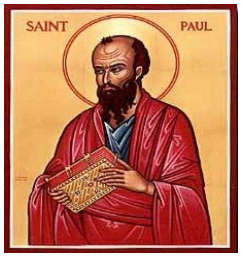
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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




## HISTORICAL STATEMENTS REGARDING THE APOSTLE PAUL...HOW CAN THEY SAY THIS ABOUT PAUL?

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**We have been addressing a serious question in our research into the Jesus-Paul relationship and problems surrounding it: Was Paul a faithful follower of Jesus and the Jerusalem Church, or a Gnostic Christian who never believed in a historical Jesus Christ, or was Paul the founder of a new religion and subverter of the true faith and teachings of the Jewish Christ? Right now, at the depth of your own scholarship and considering how much you have personally studied out the subject for yourself over many years, or taking into account your failure to do so, then how would assess your ability to understand let alone comprehend the overwhelming magnitude of the scope of the "Jesus-Paul problem" when compared with the various scholars, professors, church historians, Jewish writers, etc., who have devoted their lives to such study and written many books and scholarly treatises on the matter? If the reader of this article is a typical Christian and answers honestly the above question, then you more than likely said that you are only somewhat familiar with "one book" on the subject, the the New Testament, and your knowledge and understanding of this "one book" is most likely not as good as the scholars and professionals who write upon the subject or study the Bible academically. Honestly, few typical Christians and Pastors can really compete with those more knowledgeable on the same subjects in the Bible who have devoted their lives to study such subjects academically. But that is "ok," because you honestly cannot be expected to compare your knowledge on the subject with that of the scholars that have devoted their lives to the study of the Scriptures.**

**I wanted to ask the above question of the reader to let him know that I used to be exactly the same way. But that was over thirty years ago. My studies on this and other subjects involving the Bible are going on now over thirty years and I have been amazed at what I have found that existed concerning this "Peter (or Jerusalem Church) and Pauline Problem." I can remember the time that I didn't know that a "Jesus-Paul problem" even existed. My reading of the New Testament was so shallow at one time in my life that I literally glossed over much of it and only understood the superficial stories at best. But like I said, that was maybe thirty years ago. It was when I was attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Ft. Worth, Texas, when I first heard of this "Pauline Problem" and it was mentioned no more than 15 seconds in a lecture one day. Yes, you heard me right, I heard one sentence about it and it lasted about 15 seconds. I am glad I did not cut class that day or maybe I would never have known that such a problem existed in the early centuries of the Christian Church. I jotted some notes down to remind me to study this "problem" later as it was my custom to write a lot of things down to study later to obtain what appeared to me to be very interesting knowledge. I did finally find the time for this research following seminary and the results of these "studies" can be found on our ministry's websites. What you, the contemporary Christian needs to know, is that you don't need more instruction on the Christian perspective on Paul that comes form this "one book - The New Testament" or the host of other books written about this**

**"one book" which are little more than reiteration of this same "one book" by others who only "parrot" what has been said before about Paul. Deficient on the part of most Christian Bible scholars today is any information dealing with the Gnostic Paul, the opponent of the Jerusalem Church.**

**It will be huge surprise for most Christians but what you now believe about the apostle Paul was not held by a innumerable multitude of people down through the earliest centuries of Christianity. Let me say it another way. There exists today in the Information Age a multitude of evidence and facts outside the New Testament that not only discredits the supposed historical Christian presentation of St. Paul in most of the New Testament, but reveals this "fictitious Paul" of the New Testament for who he really was; a serious Gnostic threat to the Jerusalem Church. Needless to say, this St. Paul was not a friend to the followers of a supposed literal and historical Jesus Christ, who for the record, never appeared in the first century in Israel. Paul was, as a Gnostic Christian, an enemy of the mistaken religious beliefs taught by James and the Jerusalem Church. But, like I said, you don't know that the things that I am writing are truthful because you have only read "one book" your whole life and that "one book," the New Testament, was purposefully forged to presents Paul and his relationship with Peter and the Jerusalem Church in a very favorable light. Because of one's indoctrination with only "one book," the New Testament in the Bible, none of what I say is familiar to you. If you have ever chose to read a second or third book on the Bible or Paul, you most likely bought that book in a Christian book store and these books are guaranteed to agreed with the Bible and the New Testament. These types of books are basically only a restatement of what is written in the Bible; little scholarship will be found in these types of books. They only reinforce what you already have been taught in your current day Christian Church. Little new information concerning the true Gnostic Paul will ever come your way. When preaching in a Church recently, I mentioned that Paul was a Gnostic. No one moved a muscle, it meant nothing to them. One man, however, came up to me who was familiar from his own personal study about the Gnostic Paul and told me that he have never in his life ever heard the word "Gnostic" mentioned in Church. This is a shame.**

**Before we get into the "nuts and bolts" of the "Peter and Paul problem," I want to present you with many quotes from scholars, historians, philosophers, archeologists, etc., who have throughout their lives researched into many religious areas where they have encountered evidence and undisputable facts concerning this "Petrine-Pauline Problem" that exited between the literalizers and historicizers of the Jerusalem Church and the mystical and metaphysical believers in the indwelling Christ in mankind, the Gnostic Christians. It is time we begin to look at the other side of the coin, and for many of you, this will be the first time that you have ever done this in your entire life. These statements and quotes will at least awaken you to the existence that all is not well in Christendom when one looks at the characterization of this "Christian Paul" as presented on the pages of this "one book" that so many cherish and who see no need to read a "second book" to verify if this New Testament is a truthful depiction of the events recorded on its pages. The following list of quotes concerning Paul hopefully will accomplish in your life at least the realization that the "Jesus-Paul Problem" is real. Although this "Petrine-Pauline Problem" might be news to you, these quotations of scholars are presented for you, the reader, to see behind these quotes that there exists enough information and evidence today to not only bring this "problem" to the light of day, but irrefutable evidence that exists outside the New Testament that shows who has been dishonest with the Biblical texts. You will see, as I did, that such dishonesty is to be laid at the feet of the Orthodox Roman Church, and not the Gnostic Christians. Hence, at the end of this article we will know who the real culprit is in the mischaracterization of St. Paul in the New Testament. When one sees these quotes and the evidence behind them for himself, one cannot help come way from such an overwhelming documentation of this problem that exists outside the New Testament without the stark realization that much of the presentation of St. Paul in the New Testament is a fictitious presentation of a renegade from Biblical Judaism and a subverter of the real faith of Jesus. This is not the accurate understanding of the Gnostic Paul and his gospel, it is however, an accurate picture of an antisemtic Roman Church who hid and disguised their textual forgery of the New Testament under the false picture of St. Paul, a Paul who never had a historical existence. Someone has lied to us in this "one book" and we bought the lie hook, line, and sinker because we never knew, first of all, that such information existed or ever studied personally scholarly books outside the Bible to see for ourselves that the New Testament was unreliable in many parts. The "Petrine-Paul problem" is only one of several such problems that we find when we get serious with study of the New Testament.**

**The list of quotes is long, but it length only goes to show and expose to the first-time reader the extent of the depth of the problem surrounding St. Paul as well as the many, many people in the history of the Christian faith, as well as outside of the Christian faith, that have knowledge of this "Petrine-Paul problem." Understand, this Gnostic Paul was not a "cult" movement, but rather was in its day the dominant expression of Christianity by those who knew the Ancient Wisdom and the truth about the Gnostic Paul who they considered to be their apostle. They earliest expression of Christianity for two centuries believed the gospel of the Gnostic Paul and this will be demonstrated beyond any doubt as their quotes will reveal. It is time for you to know it as well.**

**It is time we listen to the evidence that tells the truth about Paul in the New Testament:**

- **"So Paul's claim to expert Pharisee learning is relevant to a very important and central issue--whether Christianity, in the form given to it by Paul, is really continuous with Judaism or whether it is a new doctrine, having no roots in Judaism, but deriving, in so far as it has an historical background, from pagan myths of dying and resurrected gods and Gnostic myths of heaven-descended redeemers. Did Paul truly stand in the Jewish tradition, or was he a person of basically Hellenistic religious type, but seeking to give a coloring of Judaism to a salvation cult that was really opposed to everything that Judaism stood for?" (Hyam Maccoby, The Mythmaker Paul and the Invention of Christianity, p. 204). It is here we find St. Paul is a Gnostic and his teaching is taken from the Ancient Wisdom religions which taught the Secrets of the Kingdom of God. But as well, Maccoby is referencing the transformation of the Gnostic Paul into a Romanized antisemitic characterization of the historical Paul that opposed anything Jewish in the New Testament.**

- **"Luke did for Paul what Artapanus had done for Moses. He is thereby revealed as a writer of historical fiction." (Richard I. Pervo, Profit With Delight The**

**Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles, p. 135). When textual forgery is resorted to in the Pauline Epistles, we cannot help but come away with a falsified "supposed fiction," called by Richard Pervo, "historical fiction."**

- **"Kaufmann Kohler...the distinguished Talmudic scholar and editor of the Jewish Encyclopedia, wrote in 1902 that 'nothing in Paul's writings showed that he had any acquaintance with rabbinical learning'--a judgement with which I entirely concur" (Hyam Maccoby, The Mythmaker Paul and the Invention of Christianity, p. 204). Yet, this is the way the Gnostic Paul is portrayed in the New Testament. Many religious beliefs of the Pharisees will be put into this Paul's mouth that a Gnostic Christian would not and could not every agree to. I guess we should forget that Paul is made to say that he is a "Pharisee" in Acts 23:6 and file it with the other "historical fiction" which we saw in the summary of the "Paul Problem" as we looked at the Book of Acts, as well as the non-authentic Epistles to which Paul's name was added, can consider both sets of these writings as highly suspect when it comes to any historical truth regarding the historical Paul.**

- **"Boulanger, in his Life of Paul has collected from the ecclesiastical histories, and from the writings of the fathers, as they are called, several matters which show the opinions that prevailed among the different sects of Christians at the time the Testament, as we now see it, was voted to be the Word of God. The following extracts are from the second chapter of that work: 'The Marcionists (a Christian sect) assumed that the evangelists were filled with falsities. The Manicheans, who formed a very numerous sect at the commencement of Christianity, rejected as false all the New Testament, and showed other writings quite different that they gave for authentic. The Cerinthians, like the Marcionists, admitted not the Acts of the Apostles. The Encratites, and the Sévénians, adopted neither the Acts nor the Epistles of Paul. Chrysostom, in a homily which he made upon the Acts of the Apostles, says that in his time, about the year 400, many people knew nothing either of the author or of the book. St. Irene, who lived before that time, reports that the Valentinians, like several other sects of Christians, accused the Scriptures of being filled with imperfections, errors and contradictions. The Ebionites, or Nazarines, who were the first Christians, rejected all the Epistles of Paul and regarded him as an impostor. They report, among other things, that he was originally a pagan, that he came to Jerusalem, where he lived some time; and that having a mind to marry the daughter of the high priest, he caused himself to be circumcised; but that not being able to obtain her, he quarreled with the Jews and wrote against circumcision, and against the observance of the Sabbath, and against all the legal ordinances." Thomas Paine, The Age of Reason: Being An Investigation Of True And Fabulous Theology, p. 173).**

- **"Marcion, unlike some Gnostics, relied more on biblical materials than on Greek philosophy. In particular, he emphasized Paul's teachings, asserting that the original twelve apostles had misunderstood Christ's message by thinking him to be the messiah prophesied by the Old Testament rather than understanding him to be sent by the true God. Because of this misunderstanding, it was therefore necessary for Paul to receive a special revelation to correct it." (Charles S. Clifton, Encyclopedia of Heresies and Heretics, p. 91). We find in Clifton's statement a reference by Marcion describing how the Jerusalem Church misunderstood the Messianic Scriptures. Believing them to be interpreted literally and historically, not mystically, allegorically, and metaphysically as did the apostle Paul, as well as the whole of Gnostic Christianity, they did err "not knowing the Scriptures;" Scriptures, many of which, found their origins long before the rise of the nation of Israel, as far back as Ancient Egypt.**

- **"The problem concerning the Pauline literature consists in determining the exact manner in which it was altered, rewritten, and expanded before it was accepted by the Catholic Church" (Martin A. Larson, The Story of Christian Origins or The Sources and Establishment of Western Religion, p. 437).**

- **"The only reasonable conclusion is that, since Paul was the great Gnostic spokesman more than fifty years before his writings became orthodox, these were revised and expanded by a process of Catholic forgery" (Martin A. Larson, The Story of Christian Origins or The Sources and Establishment of Western Religion, p. 438).**

- **Martin Larson stated concerning the forgery of the Pauline Epistles: "It was particularly easy for the Catholics to revise and expand the Pauline literature since it was used very little outside the heretical communions until after 170" (Martin A. Larson, The Story of Christian Origins or The Sources and Establishment of Western Religion, p. 438).**

- **"Marcion (c. 100 - c. 165 C.E.) accepted only ten Pauline epistles and that his version did not contain many of the passages found in our canonical. There can be no reasonable doubt that this was the actual corpus of Pauline literature as it existed late in the first century" (Martin A. Larson, The Story of Christian Origins or The Sources and Establishment of Western Religion, p. 529).**

- **"The figure in this creed ("Apostles' Creed") is a mythical or heavenly figure, whose connection with the sage from Nazareth is limited to his suffering and death under Pontius Pilate. Nothing between his birth and death appears to be essential to his mission or to the faith of the church. Accordingly, the gospels may be understood as corrections of this creedal imbalance, which was undoubtedly derived from the view espoused by the apostle Paul, who did not know the historical Jesus. For Paul, the Christ was to be understood as a dying/rising lord, symbolized in baptism (buried with him, raised with him), of the type he knew from the Hellenistic mystery religions. In Paul's theological scheme, Jesus the man played no essential role" (The Five Gospels The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus, p. 7).**

- **"Why? What possible reason could there have been for Paul and James and the other writers to ignore practically the whole earthly career of Jesus? Does it not raise a presumption that there was no such earthly career? What other possible reason could there have been?" (George Luther Clark, A Lawyer Looks at the Bible, p. 184). It stand to reason that the Gnostic would never mention the earthly career of Jesus since they never believed in a historical Jesus of Nazareth, that however, does not explain why James never wrote of the earthly career, ministry, and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, his supposed brother, since being head of**

**Jesus' Church.**

- **"Our opponents ask: If Jesus was not an historical personage, how is it that no one ever doubted his existence? We reply with the further question: Granting that he was an historical personage, how is it that not only does the Talmud never mention him, but, apart from the gospels, not a single work belonging to the early Christian period gives us any intimate detail about the life of this personage? Examine Paul's Epistles! As we shall show in the next chapter, they do not tell a single special fact about the life of Jesus. Read the other Epistles of the New Testament--Peter, John, James, Jude, and the Epistle to the Hebrews--and the letter of Clement to the Corinthians, the letter of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermas, the Acts of the Apostles, etc. Nowhere in any single one of these early Christian documents do we find even the slenderest reference to the mere man Jesus, or to the historical personality of Jesus as such, from which we might infer that the author had a close acquaintance with it. His life, as it is described in the gospels, in all its human detail, seems to have been entirely unknown to these authors " (Arthur Drews, The Witnesses To The Historicity Of Jesus, p. 58-59).**

- **As we have seen, the purpose of the book of Acts is to minimize the conflict between Paul and the leaders of the Jerusalem Church, James and Peter. Peter and Paul, in later Christian tradition, became twin saints, brothers in faith, and the idea that they were historically bitter opponents standing for irreconcilable religious standpoints would have been repudiate with horror. The work of the author if Acts was well done: he rescued Christianity from the imputation of being the individual creation of Paul, and instead gave it a respectable pedigree, as a doctrine with the authority of the so-called Jerusalem Church, conceived as continuous in spirit with the Pauline Gentile Church of Rome. yet, for all his efforts, the truth of the mater is not hard to recover, if we examine the New Testament evidence with an eye to telltale inconsistences and confusions, rather than with the determination to gloss over and harmonize all difficulties in the interests of an orthodox interpretation." (The Mythmaker: Paul And The Invention Of Christianity, Hyam Maccoby, p 139.**

- **"My long-time view about Christianity is that it represents an amalgam of two seemingly immiscible parts--the religion of Jesus and the religion of Paul. Thomas Jefferson attempted to excise the Pauline parts of the New Testament. There wasn't much left when he was done, but it was an inspiring document." (Letter to Ken Schei (author of Christianity Betrayed) from Carl Sagan (Scientist: Author).**

- **Albert Schweitzer, author of The Quest For The Historical Jesus stated: "Where possible Paul avoids quoting the teaching of Jesus, in fact even mentioning it. If we had to rely on Paul, we should not know that Jesus taught in parables, had delivered the sermon on the mount, and had taught His disciples the 'Our Father.' Even where they are specially relevant, Paul passes over the words of the Lord." (Blind Faith, Morn Du Toit, p. 134. Of course, this was normal for a Gnostic Christian who knew "the Christ" was the mystical and metaphysical indwelling of God and Divine Mind in mankind, not a literal or historical person as mistakenly taught the later Petrines of Jerusalem as well as Rome.**

- **"It is curious and perhaps significant that the two pagans whom the Church took most warmly to its bosom were Vergil and Seneca. Seneca is commended highly by the Latin Fathers and came to be regarded as virtually one of them. This distinction is in part due to the apocryphal (Forged) correspondence with St. Paul" (Moses Hadas, Jay Professor of Greek Columbia University, Hellenistic Culture Fusion and Diffusion, p. 57).**

- **"Paul, who did not know the historical Jesus... " (The Five Gospels The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus, 5. p. 345). This seems rather amazing, given that Paul began writing his Epistles less than twenty years from the time in which the Jesus of Nazareth supposedly lived and died.**

- **In speaking of St. Paul, Edwin Johnson stated: "We can find no proof of his historic reality. The 'Acts of Paul and Thecla,' which contain a sketch of his personal appearance, are declared by Tertullian to be the work of an Asian presbyter and a fiction. Tertullian himself, while expressing the most audacious doubts as to Paul, turns the writings ascribed to him to the account of Catholicism, and endeavour to force the Paul of the 'Acts of the Apostles' upon his contemporaries " (Edwin Johnson, Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins, p. 240-241).**

- **"Marcion (100-160 C.E.) is the first in whom, as we learn from Tertullian, traces are to be found of an authoritative group of epistles of Paul. " (Encyclopaedia Biblica: A Dictionary Of The Bible, T. K. Cheyne, J. Sutherland Black, eds., "PAUL," Vol. III, p. 3634). How could Christian writers for around 100 years or so fail to mention the Epistles of St. Paul in their debates with the Jews concerning Christ?**

- **"With respect to the canonical Pauline epistles, none of them (were) by Paul; neither fourteen, nor thirteen, nor nine or ten, nor seven or eight, nor yet even the four so long 'universally' regarded as unassailable. They are all, without distinction, pseudepigrapha (this of course, not implying the least depreciation of their contents). The history of criticism, the breaking up of the group which began as early as 1520, already pointed in this direction." (Encyclopaedia Biblica: A Dictionary Of The Bible, T. K. Cheyne, J. Sutherland Black, eds., "PAUL," Vol. III, p. 3625).**

- **"One of the strongest pieces of evidence to our mind, negatively, that the Paul who has so long captivated our admiration and love is not historical, positively, that he is the product, like all similar figures, of religious passion and imagination is that Lucian, whose glance embraced the great seats of supposed Pauline activity, betrays no knowledge of any such vigorous personality as having left his mark upon the Christian communities from a century before his time (Edwin Johnson, published anonymously, Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins, p. 253-254).**

- **Edwin Johnson stated concerning Justin Martyr, the first apologist of Christianity (100-165 C.E.): "His (silence about Paul, when he had every reason to cite him**

**in his anti-Judaistic reasonings, is a silence that speaks--a void that no iteration of unattested statements, no nebulous declamation, can ever fill." (Edwin Johnson, published anonymously, Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins, p. 253-254).**

- **"Similarly in Paul there is a complete silence about the empty tomb; and it is likely that Paul did not know of this tradition. In any case, he is more interested in the present reality and future significance of the resurrection than in the purely historical aspect of the event " (Origins of Christianity, R. Joseph Hoffmann, ed., "The Story of the First Easter," p. 318).**
- **"the body of eighty-two clearly established readings from the text available to Marcion (c. 100 - c. 165 C.E.) is an invaluable window into the state of the early second-century text of Paul's letters. Through it one can see for oneself the fluid state of the text of that time" (The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series, "A Lost Edition of the Letters of Paul A Reassessment of the Text of the Pauline Corpus Attested by Marcion", p. 5-6).**
- **"Justin knows nothing of Paul, but he names Marcion immediately after Simon and Menander; and it is in connection with Marcion that we hear for the first time of Paul, whose name has come down to us as the representative of the great anti-Judaistic or anti-nomian movement in early Christianity." (Edwin Johnson, 1842-1901, published anonymously, Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins, p. 1887, 251).**
- **"In considering the background of Paul, I have returned to one of the earliest accounts of Paul in existence, that given by the Ebionites ("the poor"), as reported by Epiphanius. This account has been neglected by scholars for quite inadequate and tendentious reasons." (Hyam Maccoby, The Mythmaker Paul and The Invention of Christianity, p. xii).**
- **"And it is still a question whether ' Paul,' that figure which suddenly starts up in Gnostic company at the middle of the second century more ' hebraises,' or more ' hellenises,' or whether so-called ' Paulinism' be not a heterogeneous mixture of conservatism and innovation; whether the current portraits of this latest ' apostle' do not present variations irreconcilable with the hypothesis of a historic individual." (Edwin Johnson 1842-1901, published anonymously, Antiqua Mater: A Study of Christian Origins, p. 233-234).**
- **"But, instead of this, St. Paul beats the air with words, which, magnificent as they are, seem out of relation to the actual Jewish religion. They leave the impression: either this man was never a Rabbinic Jew at all, or he has quite forgotten what Rabbinic Judaism was and is." (The Jewish Quarterly Review, Volume 13, Israel Abrahams, Claude Montefiore, p. 206)**
- **"The only hypothesis that satisfactorily explains the peculiar agreement in the style of the whole collection, and at the same time the differences not merely between one Epistle and another, but between different parts of the same Epistle, is that which has been set forth —namely, that none were written by the Apostle Paul, but that all proceeded from one circle or 'school.'" (The Origins Of Christianity: With An Outline Of Van Manen's Analysis Of The Pauline Literature, Thomas Whittaker, p. 148).**
- **"The Pauline Epistles generally are assigned to the period between 120 and 140 A.D." (The Origins Of Christianity: With An Outline Of Van Manen's Analysis Of The Pauline Literature, Thomas Whittaker, p. 148).**
- **"Paul was the greatest fantasist of all. He created the Christian myth by deifying Jesus" (Hyam Maccoby, The Mythmaker Paul and the Invention of Christianity, p. 204).**
- **"The myth (Jesus) adumbrated by Paul was then brought into full imaginative life in the Gospels, which were written under the influence of Paul's ideas and for the use of the Pauline Christian Church" (Hyam Maccoby, The Mythmaker Paul and the Invention of Christianity, p. 205).**
- **"Books of the New Testament, dates of the: The determination of the dates of the various books of the N.T. is beset with difficulties and uncertainties. In the first place, none of these works is explicitly and definitely dated by its author. Nor does any writing contain unmistakable references by which it might be accurately dated. Further, it is highly probable that most of the authors are unknown to us, save for Paul, for apart from his letters the books in the New Testament are almost without exception either anonymous, or, what is worse, pseudonymous. Finally, the external attestation to their authorship and date is meager and as a rule unreliable" (An Encyclopedia of Religion, Vergilius Ferm, ed., p. 83).**
- **"The group (Pauline Epistles)...bears obvious marks of a certain unity--of having originated in one circle, at one time, in one environment; but not of unity of authorship." (Encyclopaedia Biblica, T. K. Cheyne, J. Sutherland Black, eds., "PAUL," E. Hatch and W. van Manen, Adam and Charles Black, Vol. III, p. 3626).**
- **"The man (Paul) and his message are not identical with the letters." (Leander Keck, Paul and His Letters, p. vii).**
- **"What we have are those forms of Paul's letters which were prepared for church use long after Paul himself wrote them." (Leander Keck, Paul and His Letters, p. vii, 14).**

**After reading these many quotes and contemplating upon what these authorities have said, as well as the possible reasons for them saying such things as they do about Paul, both good and bad, then it would seem only natural that there are two different Pauls of which they speak. As well, it would seen only natural to understand that there is another side to Paul that Christianity has not taught or desires its adherents to see. Be not mistaken, most Christian scholars today as well as Christian pastors of Churches are not aware that this information exits. Because a man writes a book or holds a prestigious position in some denominational or academic structure does not guarantee that he has seen, knows, and has studied what you have just been introduced too. It is my desire to bring this information to the readership of Bet Emet Ministries and the world in hopes that the real truth concerning the early Christianity be recovered and that the earliest gospel be once again preached in all the world instead of the false gospel being preached today.**

**Was Paul a faithful follower of Jesus and the Jerusalem Church, or a Gnostic Christian who never believed in a historical Jesus Christ, or was Paul the founder of a new religion and subverter of the true faith and teachings of the Jewish Christ? Is is not to the evidence and proofs that exist to which we must turn in order to answer the above questions beyond any doubt. Only by exposing what is not true regarding the depiction of Paul in the New Testament, can we hope of reversing an indoctrination filled with religious untruths to the point where we can accept the higher truth regarding Paul which we were never taught our whole lives by a Christianity who long ago lost it way.**

**Home**

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE PAULINE PROBLEM SURROUNDING HIM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Paul was probably the most famous and successful letter-writer in history. He even started a new genre of literature, called epistles, which he used to spread his religious ideas. Paul's epistles, often written in haste for particular occasions affecting a small segment of society and not meant for all, were shaped by local circumstances and would later become the foundation of a new religion which would divorce itself from it's mother's faith and the faith of Yeshua in many ways (Biblical Judaism). Paul developed his doctrine while on the move, traveling from Judea to Rome, through Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece. His most famous and inclusive letter, Romans, was probably composed in Corinth about the year 53. As problems developed, Paul formulated his letters to meet the unique demands at various places and situations. The most serious challenges to which he responded were the threat of Gentile converts observing Jewish practices.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul concerned in Gentile coverts being taught to obey Biblical commandments requiring them to observe "Jewish practices"? That is a matter of diverse opinion.**

**Answer for yourself: Was he concerned because some others were also teaching Gentile converts that they HAD to observe them, not out of love and obedience to God, but because they were NECESSARY FOR THEIR SALVATION? Yes he was and this needs explanation. There were Jews who imposed upon the Gentiles forced "circumcision" for acceptance and they did so in hopes that such a radical procedure upon adult males would keep them from social and religious involvement with the Jews. This was bigotry in the highest degree. Paul was right in his earlier attempts to stop such forced "circumcision" as "necessary" for acceptance of Gentile by Jews. This is termed "salvation" by some yet "salvation" was not the issue; rather, the term was used for Jewish acceptance of Gentiles without circumcision which was, up to that time, required for conversion and acceptance of the non-Jews by Jews. So Paul was right in the beginning: "the Gentiles are not under "the" Law of circumcision" according to their Covenant of Noah. Sadly over the years Paul would move well beyond the Law of circumcision and end up in his latter years rejecting all Law. This is where Paul makes his fatal mistake.**

**Dear child of God, it is this very issue which has escaped the majority of Christians for 1800 years and has robbed them of their rightful heritage, and has thus, through erroneous teaching, caused the majority of Gentile Christians to misunderstand the message of Paul and his rejection of the "Law."**

**Let me say again; Paul was not against the attraction of Judaism toward potential Gentile proselytes, but Paul was, in the beginning at least, against the perversion of the truth as taught by some that made obedience to the Law of circumcision, which was given to the Jews and not Gentiles, as "necessary" for Gentile salvation (circumcision was never commanded of Gentiles in the Covenant of Noah). Some of Paul's letters were directed against his opponents who, because of racial bigotry toward Gentiles, were making the assimilation of Gentiles into the Kingdom of God so difficult (by requiring circumcision of adult males before acceptance into the Israel of God), that many would, under such requirements, choose to not accept Monotheism, and thereby eventually die without God. In-depth study of the New Testament will show that**

**Paul repeatedly taught Gentiles, once having come to faith in God through Yeshua's Movement within Judaism, to observe the Sabbaths and Festivals of God. Other letters were sent to his emissaries, encouraging them in their missionary work. Paul addressed some of his epistles to the Gentile communities he wished to stay in touch with and could not or did not yet visit.**

**Please understand that I am not out to attack Paul. Possibly his writing were altered after his writing of them by the Gentile Church. Possibly Paul changed his beliefs at the end of his life whereby he not only rejected the Law of Circumcision for non-Jews but the rest of the Law. We do know one thing for certain however; namely, that the Jerusalem Church and James had a real problem with him. We will never know for certain. Please understand however that in this article, since it is viewed by the majority of Christianity, that Paul is the author of most of the epistles in the New Testament, I will and must assume he is the rightful author are responsible for what is written under his name. In so doing at times I will have to deal harshly with misrepresentations of the Jewish texts as this occurs under "Paul's name." Regardless try to remain objective in what follows when Paul's epistles are put under the microscope so to speak.**

***Having said such kind things of Paul, I must now take offense at other things he wrote, or were altered after his writing of them, that are direct contradictions of what God had spoken through Moses, the Prophets, and even Yeshua himself.***

**"No way" you probably respond, but before you discount what I have to say, you best listen attentively to what I will show you, for your rewards in the world to come will be determined by not only what you believe, but how you respond to what you believe. Needless to say, if we have believed Paul, and his writings can be shown to contradict Yeshua, Moses, etc., then someone is wrong! Let me say at the outset that without a life dedicated to in-depth study of the Bible through comparative study, then the casual reader of the English Bible is not equipped to cast dispersions upon what I present. I challenge you to read thoroughly what I present and evaluate it for yourself once you have been presented all the facts.**

**I will show you that many of the writings attributed to Paul expressed new doctrines which Paul brought to Nazarene Judaism and which eventually had great influence on all of Gentile Christianity.**

***The irony of this is that many of these "new" doctrines oppose and contradict the teachings of Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua which are the very foundation of Christianity as a Messianic branch of Judaism. In other words the daughter kills the mother!***

**Most authorities on Christian Scriptures agree with the statement of Joseph Fitzmeyer and Raymond Brown, "Romans has affected later Christian theology more than any other New Testament book". It influenced the development of other books In the Christian canon, the Patristic (Church Fathers') literature, and the theological writings of the Reformation as well.**

**Answer for yourself: If I can demonstrate to you that some of the key doctrines in Romans (and especially Galatians) espoused by coming from Paul are directly in violation of what Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua taught, then can you grasp the seriousness of the situation if we casually and not critically read and understand the epistles of Paul?**

**Answer for yourself: Would you not rather find out now that some of what you have believed from Paul's writings, and modeled your life after, is incorrect and God would not desire you believe in and follow such**

**teachings?**

Paul even gave the name to this new religion as well as much of its philosophy. It was he who put great emphasis on the designation "Christ" and, according to Acts, used the name Christians for disciples of Yeshua. After you finish these articles you will clearly see that the writings attributed to Paul brought into the religion of Yeshua many changes that distinguished it from it mother's faith….Biblical Judaism.

## HOW DID PAUL'S WRITINGS CONTRADICT THE FAITH OF YESHUA?

In the articles that follow I will present you with a systematic disclosure of how Paul introduced the centrality of grace and faith, as distinguished from "works," along with the belief that "faith and grace" replaced the Torah and its injunctions for good deeds. **Such is an abomination when compared with the revelation of the God who changes not and His message in the Hebrew Scriptures.** Paul did much to transform Yeshua from a human Jewish messiah to a divine Greek Christ**. His influence on at least one of the evangelists, Luke, and on most of the early Gentile Greek Fathers and their interpretation of the Gentile manifestations of the faith of Yeshua is well documented for those who seek such information. Paul's writing, penned up as much as 50 years before any Gospels, lay the foundation and influence which would later guide the Gentile writers of the Gospels in Asia Minor. That's right, the other Gentile writers, for modern scholarship today disprove the thought that the original Jewish followers of Yeshua had anything to do with the four Gospels in the New Testament.** The early Gentile-Greek (catholic-universal) Church accepted and adopted Paul's theological views and Paul's attitude toward the Torah and Jews as over against the views of a Jewish Rabbi named Yeshua. **That's the problem we live with today as we have inherited the legacy of the Catholic Church whether we wanted to or not.** This distortion of a Jewish faith by the early Gentile Roman Church was not very difficult for them as most were already anti-Semitic themselves. **The early Gentile Church's Hellenistic background combined with the competition from Judaism as a world-wide established religion with its adamant followers, turned Paul's adherents into anti-Semites. They manifested the identical hostility for Jews and Judaism which characterized the ideological descendants five, ten, and twenty centuries later. The same basic factor was operative in evoking resentment in ancient Asia Minor as in medieval Europe and in modem day nations of the east and west. Fear and threat of competition from one's presumed competition (the Jews), whether in economic, political, or religious sphere, are powerful spurs to hatred.**

This is what you have inherited as Christians today because we carry in our Bibles a document called the New Testament which is full of contradictions with prior God-given doctrines accepted by Yeshua and the whole Messianic community. Besides that you will find upon close examination that Paul's writing are characterized by a flood of Biblical quotations which are usually garbled and often joined randomly to one another in such a manner that destroys the original intent of the original author. More often that not Paul misquotes the Old Testament on purpose to further his theology, or lifts the verses out of their original context and twists the meaning to his own pleasure to further a point at the expense of the original meaning of the original author. **You probably have never seen this for yourself but I will show this to you in numerous articles that follow, and once you see for yourself, then you can make an intelligent decision of the matter for yourself. As if that is not enough,** Paul's citations from the Hebrew Bible are not based on the traditionally accepted Masoretic Text and often, not even on the less reliable Septuagint. More often that not Paul's use of Scripture are his own creations, formulated to meet his theological need. Again more often than not Paul's versions of Biblical quotations are usually remote from the original passages, thus giving them a different meaning and intent which was in the mind of the original author. Sadly, and what you have yet to see for yourself, is that these distortions of a once prior held faith became dogma in Gentile Christianity. Cherished and accepted truths given by God since before Sinai were contradicted by Paul and many are not aware, since

being New Testament Christians and not being Old Testament Christians whereby you would have familiarity with the Jewish texts and could spot mistranslations and misquotations with ease.

**In closing, when attention and focus is turned to the mainline churches, where a well-educated ministry has always been required, it becomes obvious that they have, by and large, simply ignored the Bible. The average pew sitter in the average mainline church, both Catholic and Protestant, is, to say it bluntly, biblically illiterate. I used to be that way myself over 15 years ago. But I have devoted myself over these last 15 years or so to serious study of the Bible along with its culture, language, history, etc. The biblical scholarship of the past two hundred years has simply not been made available to the man or the woman in the pew. It is for these reasons that I have found it imperative to put another voice into the public arena.**

**Depending on how much of the New Testament and the Pauline corpus of literature has been made into an idol by my readers, my articles will be regarded as either enlightening or disturbing. My hope is that it will help members of the Christian churches to allow their soon-to-be-twenty-first-century minds to become aware of the distortion done to the original Gospel of Yeshua and the Jerusalem Church by Paul and his followers. I write as a New Testament God-Fearer who loves the church. I am not a hostile critic who stands outside religion desiring to make fun of it. I am not a Marxist who believes that religion is the opiate of the people. I am not a Madalyn Murry O'Hair who believes that God should be expunged from public life. I am an ordained Pastor who was raised as a biblical fundamentalist and who, when studied to a sufficient level, found glaring errors in the New Testament, and specifically with Paul and his "gospel", which a cursory reading overlooked. Added to that was finally the shame I felt when I fully realized to what degree of deception I had fallen and the number of years where I lived before my God as an idolator and never knew it! What had I not studied before? Why had I not loved God enough to look into my faith seriously? Was it because I went to seminary that I did so? Does not the everyday Christian have the same responsibility to verify if what he has been taught is correct?**

**There will be some who, upon reading these articles, will be disturbed and even angry. I regret that. I have no desire to make uncomfortable anyone's fragile life. Yet, I must be true to God and the truth which once was the foundation of the true church of Yeshua before such truth was corrupted by Paul and others. By God's grace and my hard efforts at investigative research over the last 15 years, coupled with the calling of a Pastor, my heart is broken for the condition of the church today and the false gospel it has received in place of the one originally taught by the apostles of Yeshua.**

**I give you the fruit of my efforts. It is the greatest expression of my love for God and those created in His image. I will continue to argue and provide these insights, drawn largely from Biblical scholarship over the past hundreds years to which God has made available to me. I make it available to you.** My goal of my Pastoral life is to combine scholarship with faith, to bring honesty to interpretation of the Biblical text, and to expose deception and error within the New Testament to the unsuspecting in order that their lives may be benefited by such knowledge. It is my hope that through information and knowledge presented by Bet Emet that your repentance to false beliefs will ensure your greater reward in the world to come as well as a more correct Biblical life-style whereby you love God correctly through obedient actions which are the result of such knowledge. Our goal is to return to the faith of Yeshua, because Pauline influenced Christianity today is a poor example of it. You will soon see, that in order to do so, you must understand Paul and his apostasy from the faith of Yeshua.



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# PAUL'S FAILURE TO TEACH US ABOUT JESUS

**We left off in our introductory article by posing some very important spiritual as well as theological questions:**

- **Was Paul a faithful follower of Jesus or the founder of a new religion or the agent most responsible for changing the faith and religion of Jesus for the Gentile world?**
- **What evidence exists, if any, will help us answer this question beyond any doubt?**

**If you continue your study of this website and the materials presented you, like I, will be astounded when you finish at what you see and will be totally bewildered how those who came before through the halls of Christian history did not see these things, let alone acknowledge or follow such truths. The reasons are many running the gamut; namely, from ignorance of their existence to a purposefully orchestrated program build upon the hatred of Anti-Semitism toward the Jewish people by the Gentiles. Now we must turn our attention to the texts and all sources of necessary evidence and information whereby we can adequately seek out the answer to the above questions.**

## PAUL'S NONUSE OF THE TEACHINGS AND SAYINGS OF JESUS

**One of the most embarrassing facts for those who see Paul as a follower of Jesus is his failure to refer much to Jesus' life or teaching. In his letters Paul refers very frequently to the death and resurrection of Jesus, but as for Jesus' birth, baptism, miracles, parables, transfiguration, etc., there is a deafening silence. As for the sayings of Jesus, Paul hardly quotes them at all, at least explicitly.**

**There are two exceptions to this silence. The first is 1 Cor 7:10, where Paul refers to Jesus' teaching on divorce:**

***To the married I give this command - not I but the Lord - that the wife should not separate from her husband. . . , and that the husband should not divorce his wife.***

**This is taken as an allusion to Jesus' teaching on divorce, which comes in various parts of the Gospels: Matt 5:27,28; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18.**

**The other is 1 Cor 9:14, where Paul writes:**

***In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.***

**This is usually taken to be an echo of Matt 10:10/Luke 10:7, where Jesus says: "the laborer is worthy of his food/hire."**

**Thus in 7:10 he mentions Jesus' prohibition of divorce, but then proceeds to give his own regulations on divorce in the church. In 9:14 he refers to Jesus' teaching on paying missionaries, but does so in the context of an**

**explanation of why he, Paul, does not accept payment for his ministry.**

**It is not just the small number of quotations from Jesus that is striking, but specifically Paul's failure to quote from the sayings of Jesus where he might appropriately have done so. For example, in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 Paul is urging the Corinthians to be generous in contributing to the collection he is making for the Christians in Jerusalem. He uses a battery of different arguments to press his readers to respond, but no use at all is made of the extensive and colorful teaching of Jesus about wealth, poverty, and "laying up treasures in heaven" (Goulder, Midrash and Lection in Matthew, 148-49).**

# HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN PAUL'S SILENCE REGARDING THE LACK OF REFERENCE TO JESUS' TEACHINGS?

**Answer for yourself: What is to be made of Paul's almost total silence in regard to Jesus' teaching and life before his passion?**

**The obvious conclusion, as it has seemed to many, is that Paul was not interested in the pre-passion ministry of Jesus and may in fact have been quite poorly informed about it. This may seem a surprising conclusion. But the argument is logical enough: Had Paul known much about Jesus' ministry and teaching and had they been important to him, he (like modern Christian preachers) would surely have referred to them continually. In fact he does not.**

**Answer for yourself: How could Paul have been uninterested in Jesus' life and teaching and yet have called himself a "slave of Jesus Christ"?**

**Paul's faith, it is argued, focused on the death and resurrection of Jesus and then on the risen Lord and his work in the church by his Spirit. It was this Jesus that Paul worshiped and served; what the earthly Jesus said and did was of very little importance to him. So the influential Rudolf Bultmann can say:**

***"Jesus' teaching is - to all intents and purposes - irrelevant for Paul"* (Bultmann, "Significance of the Historical Jesus," p.223) .**

**Commenting on his view S. G. Wilson claims: "One aspect of Bultmann's analysis has won the day: few would now deny that Paul's interest in the person and teaching of Jesus is minimal" (Wilson, "From Jesus to Paul," p. 6-7).**

**Fredriksen, in her From Jesus to Christ, p. 174, states:**

***"About Jesus of Nazareth Paul evinces little interest."***

**Answer for yourself: So did Paul have little interest in Jesus since he said so little about him? Or should we assume that Paul did not need to teach the Gentiles about what Jesus taught since they already knew? Hardly the latter! Of course you see right out that the non-Jews had not heard of Jesus and we cannot assume they had any prior knowledge at all. Thus we are left with the convincing position of these scholars, as well as a host of more, that tell us that from the writings of Paul a case cannot be made that Paul was concerned for what Jesus believed or taught since his preaching of this Jesus only has 2 measly references to what Jesus believed, and again, both times they are just one sentence each (THINK)!**

**For Paul Jesus' death and resurrection were theologically so much more important to him.**

**Answer for yourself: How could it be that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus held more importance for Paul that the years of teaching of Jesus, especially in light of the knowledge that nowhere outside of the Essene**

**community was any expected "messiah" or deliver expected to die and that the one expected by the Essenes was to die in a battle?**

**Answer for yourself: What does any of this Essene belief in a battlefield death of an "anointed one" have to do with an itinerant preacher of repentance from Galilee?**

**Answer for yourself: Where would one like Paul get such an over-emphasis concerning the death and resurrection of such an "anointed one" if the Jewish Bible and Masoretic text, Moses, and the Jewish Prophets, never wrote of an "anointed one" who was to die and be resurrected?**

**Well I don't want to let the cat out of the bag but to say these thought are troublesome is an understatement. Oh, I can hear some readers say: "Hasn't Pastor Craig never read Isaiah 53?" Yes, both the corrupted one you have that came from the Essenes continual "doctoring" of the texts in order to make it align their their solar and astral worship from Egypt that gave them in the first the concept of dying and rising sun-godmen and the Isaiah 53 that was meticulously keep unchanged by other Jews from well before 200 B.E.C. (at the time of its corruption by the Essenes). The oldest copies know to be in existence were from 900 to 1000 A.D. and since these were not as old as the Greek translations which read completely different as taken from the Greek translation, it was normal for Christians to assume that since these were older and contained different readings in "messianic portions," that they assumed the Jews had written out Jesus from their Bibles and altered their texts to write out this "godman" of the Gospel of John who dies for the world in Isaiah 53. Well, that was the belief until 1950 when the Dead Sea Scrolls showed us that older than these Greek translations that were thought to be more correct than the then-existing Jewish copies which read different, we found older Hebrew Masoretic texts that agreed 99.9% completely with what had existed since 900 A.D. which were thought by the Christian community to have been changed in reaction to Judaism. It seems now, without any doubt, it is the Christian texts which have been altered away from the oldest Jewish Manuscripts existing and not the other way around.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it remotely possible that Paul, since not getting his ideas of a dead and resurrected Messiah from conservative Judaism but got his ideas from the Essene branch of Judaism whom themselves got such ideas from other sun-worshipping Gentile religions both before and present in their day?**

**Sadly, that is the case and we will see that fact beyond any doubt before we finish this website. That is why the teachings of Jesus are not important for Paul because he changes the message of Jesus and the message of salvation that Jesus taught. Notice how many times Paul promotes himself over James and the Jerusalem apostles who knew Jesus best (Galatians 2). Notice how many times Paul refers to "my Gospel" instead of Jesus' gospel! Paul and Jesus preached two different religions and faiths. Paul and Jesus had two different salvation messages. Paul reiterates in Jewish overtone the same message since Osiris of Egypt who died and later rose from the dead and his wife had a virgin born son after his death. There is nothing new under the SUN...pardon the pun. Every Gentile nation of the world was affected by Egypt and we continue in this same vein today and we just don't know or recognize it. Likewise we don't recognize it when we read the Bible because we have been "conditioned" to accept every thing we read there as if it came from God. No, sorry it did not and it can be proven if your heart is strong enough to take it. The sad facts of such a deception foisted upon every good Christian of this world are plain to see, but I warn you it is tough stuff.**

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**I pray and ask you have the objectivity to read and study and the courage to continue for what will be shown to you throughout the above website as well as this one dealing exclusively with Paul will not be pretty in light of what you have been taught most of your life as a Pauline Christian and not as a Jewish Christian (Jewish Messianic believer). My prayers are with you for your strength to handle what you will find and the grace to repent of religious lies and errors when pointed out to you with ample evidence. Shalom.**

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# THE GOSPEL MESSAGE OF JESUS AND PAUL...DO THEY AGREE?

**The question of Paul's knowledge and his lack of use of the stories and sayings of Jesus is not the only ingredient in discussion of Paul's relationship to Jesus. There is also the question of the conflicting salvation messages of Jesus and Paul. Paul could have made extensive and explicit use of Jesus' teaching and yet he chose not to. The end result is that Paul ends up with a theology having a very different feel and emphasis from the religious belief system of Jesus. Over the years of my Pastorate as well as my years teaching on the Internet it never ceases to amaze me that when the different and conflict "gospels" and salvation messages of these two men are mentioned many respond that I must be wrong because Paul and Jesus taught the same things. Well of course their ethics and morality teachings are similar but again there are differences to be found between them. Such differences and contradictions prove that Paul was correcting Jesus as well as Biblical Judaism and I have a problem with that. The failure of many people and many Christian writers to notice such a difference between the conflicting salvation messages of these two men reveal their overall lack of understanding and comprehension of the Bible on the whole when addressing a book as thick and difficult as the New Testament let alone the Old Testament because, be not mistaken, Jesus' salvation message comes from the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (Old Testament) as recorded as taught by him in the New Testament and Paul's salvation message is nowhere to be found in the Jewish Scriptures but only from pagan solar and astral worship and of course as recorded as taught by him in the New Testament. That fact coupled with the fact that Paul's writings came long before the Gospels shows his influence upon these writers as well as unbiased scholarship today can teach us, if we desire to listen, that the authors of the Gospels were not Jews and that they most likely were not written or credited to apostolic authorship until around 200 A.D. by Irenaeus.**

**Like I mentioned above it is taken for granted by many Christians that Jesus and Paul preached essentially the same gospel. However, it does not take a very sharp mind to observe that there are quite significant differences between Jesus and Paul gospels and messages of salvation.**

**There are differences in presentation, with Jesus speaking in pithy, pictorial sayings and Paul in sustained and often rather complicated arguments. But there are other differences, too: The center of Jesus' message is the kingdom of God; Paul, however, refers rather rarely to the kingdom, and it is not a central concept in his letters. The center of Paul's message has to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus, and he speaks of people being 'justified' rather than of 'entering the kingdom.' In many other ways Paul is distinct from Jesus: His massive interest in the Holy Spirit and in the Gentile mission, his negative attitude toward the OT law, and his teaching on the church as a 'body' all set Paul apart from Jesus (at least as Jesus is described in the synoptic Gospels).**

**Answer for yourself: What is to be made of this and other similar data?**

**One obvious possibility, fitting in with the observations we have already made about Paul's failure to draw**

**much on Jesus' teaching, is that he was not trying to follow - let alone to reproduce slavishly - the ideas and teaching of the historical Jesus. Paul's theological vision arose rather out of his prior teaching of dying and rising godmen when growing up in Tarsus and his experience and vision of the risen Jesus in his own life, and in developing that vision under the guidance of the Spirit (as he believed) he departed significantly from the religion of Jesus, introducing new ideas and radically reshaping the Christian faith. Whether or not the provocative title 'founder of Christianity' is used, many scholars would accept the general assessment of Paul that it represents: He transformed the Jewish religion of Jesus into something very different, and he influenced subsequent Christian thought and belief decisively (David Wenham, Paul: Follower Of Jesus Or Founder Of Christianity, p. 7).**

**In order to answer the question "follower of Jesus or founder of Christianity'' we will need to weigh the similarities and differences between the teachings of these men as recorded for us both inside and outside the New Testament in order to see whether Paul and Jesus are at one in the main points of their theology and in the overall thrust of what they say, or whether there has been a major change of direction between Jesus and Paul.**

## So we have two disputed questions to consider:

- **How much did Paul know and care about Jesus' ministry (including his teaching)?**
- **And how far did Paul agree or disagree theologically with Jesus and his religious beliefs and teachings?**

**The two questions are quite distinct, though not necessarily unrelated.**

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# WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #1

## EXAMINING YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

**For many of our readers the information in this article will be startling. After reading this article you will see for yourself that if you follow contemporary Christianity and its teachings then you are following Paul and not Jesus/Yeshua, because Yeshua' message of redemption is entirely opposite to what Paul teaches. I can hear many of you say...."that's not so" or "he is wrong." Let me sincerely tell you that in the beginning, even after my seminary training I did not see it as clearly as I do today. But I beg of you to read this article and THINK...THINK....of what I will show you. For in the end, you are directly responsible before God, and HaShem is sending you and many of His children today appeals to repent and return to the true faith once given to the saints. Time is of the essence, and it will be horrible to die and find out that you followed the wrong faith...a faith that does not save.**

**One last thing; you might wonder what the end-result should be of such a series of studies. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that when you complete these articles the reader will be able to understand that Christianity is best understood and practiced from a Jewish viewpoint which restores the Sabbaths and the Seven Biblical Festivals. Such emphasis is almost totally lacking in the Christian church today. Also, a renewed emphasis in proper tithing and righteous giving hopefully will replace the current perversion of giving as seen in most churches and on televisions today. What you will come to see is that all these above things, and more, embody the true salvation experience. Let us begin…shall we?**

## YESHUA WAS A JEW...AND TAUGHT BIBLICAL JUDAISM

**I think few will take issue with my statement that in the New Testament Yeshua is pictured as a Jew who believed in Judaism and taught others to be faithful to his religion's precepts and laws forever!**

**In this article I will quote many verses from the New Testament, and it is important to understand from the outset that although much in the New Testament is unreliable, when we find places in it which agrees with Moses and the Prophets we have found a witness to the Word of God as recorded in the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible). Let us not stagger at the comment that "much in the New Testament is unreliable," because in this article I will show you that many of these New Testament verses oppose Moses and the Prophet, let alone Yeshua's teachings, and are irreconcilably contradictory to the Gospel Yeshua preached which can be found along side them in the New Testament. Both passages confirming that Yeshua believed and both taught Moses and the Prophets regarding salvation, as well as verses contradicting what Yeshua taught, have remained included in the New Testament through the ages. These verses remain for a purpose today. They remain to show the careful reader and student the truth amidst fiction as written in the New Testament.**

**Likewise, the purpose could well be to reassure Jews who are in doubt about their Judaism, and are thinking of leaving Judaism for Christianity, that Judaism and Torah has always been and will always be the road to God for the people of God; both Jew and Non-Jew. Those unsure Jews and deceived Christians perhaps can have their belief in God, Torah, and Israel (Judaism) kindled and can be kept on God's pathway by the very same Christian Book through which they have unknowingly deserted their true people and God! Indeed, Jews who already have left their faith as well as Christians who are returning to the Jewish faith once given the saints are daily having their eyes opened to the truths I will reveal in this article. Prayerfully, many will return as baal teshuvah and through repentance turn to the God of Israel, who surely is waiting with fatherly understanding and forgiveness. *Believe Yeshua in this matter - Eternal life is obtained through Judaism. Paul teaches otherwise and contradicts Yeshua on this matter.***

**For devout Jews who were once Christians and Christians who have studied to see the errors of their prior faith and have returned to a more correct and Biblical Sinai faith, the revelations in this article will be very comfortable corroboration of their firm faith in the holiness of the religion of Yeshua; namely Biblical Judaism. Others who read these verses will bring to them their own heritage and will make of them what they will. In other words they will continue to selectively hear what they choose regardless of the facts presented here.**

**These pages of reverse proof-texts are intended to strengthen the course God set up for Jews as well as Non-Jews and to fortify their faith and devotion to His plan of salvation for all mankind. In effect, here you will discover confirmation of Biblical Judaism's everlasting truth and validity through the words of Yeshua and others in the New Testament. Often this confirmation will conflict with what Paul taught, but more on that later. Now, let's get into it.**

# WHO WILL YOU BELIEVE.....YESHUA OR PAUL? LISTEN. …..YESHUA SPEAKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Matthew 5:17-19, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one little shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall *do and teach them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."**

**Try and read the above passage over three or four times. Get the intent of Yeshua into your mind and soul. You can read this over and over and never end your astonishment; especially in light of what you have heard preached in your churches. Remember, these are Yeshua' words saying he is here to follow the law of Moses, not end the law. Until the world ends, the law as written will be in effect. Jews and Non-Jews who obey the law and teach it are greatly loved by God, while those who transgress the law and teach its transgression are not. Notice that although the word "fulfill" could mean "to complete or end," in this case and context it clearly means "to obey and do." We know this because the following sentence continues the idea that the law will not change until the world ends, which still has not occurred two thousand years later. Just look outside your window.**

**Luke 16:16-17, "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist): since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one little of the law to fail."**

**Preaching the kingdom (God's rule and reign over mankind through submission to the King's decrees….laws and commandments) is emphasized since John the Baptist, Yeshua said. But the laws of the Torah are still effective and good, to be fulfilled until the world ends. Notice for yourself that in no way does "until John" signify the end of the law, because the very next sentence substantiates the law's validity forever (easier for heaven and earth to pass….notice again that this has not occurred yet).**

**Luke 16:19-20,22-24,27-31, "There was a certain rich man, . . . And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, . . . the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, . . . And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, . . . I pray thee . . . send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: . . . that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent (Yeshua and not Paul). And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."**

**Answer for yourself: Is this a New Testament teaching?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua in the New Testament is teaching that making it to Abraham's bosom (Heaven) was connected to listening to Moses and the Prophets?**

**Answer for yourself: What is this parable from Luke really teaching?**

**Notice first that it is Yeshua and not Paul who is doing the teaching in this story. Yeshua clearly relates in this story that the laws of Moses and the words of the prophets which teach repentance lead the faithful to Abraham's bosom, instead of hell. Moses and the prophets are the pathway to eternal life in heaven according to Yeshua. Yeshua taught this and not Paul. If you will be honest with yourself most of you are typical Christians who read our articles, and the vast majority have been told by their Pastors and Churches that they are not under the Law (Moses and the Prophets), but rather, they are under grace (Paul). They have been told that the Law (Moses and the Prophets) has passed away for Christians and they are no longer under the Law but under grace (Paul's gospel). In other words you have listened to Paul more than you have to Yeshua.**

**Answer for yourself: But how can the teaching of Paul in this regard be opposite to what Yeshua said, and since opposite, who are you to trust for your eternal life?**

**Matthew 19:16-19 (Mark 10:17,19) (Luke 18:18,20), ". . . Good Master, what good thing shall I *do*, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him . . . if thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments* . . . Which? Yeshua said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself "**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that "having eternal life" is connected by Yeshua with "keeping the commandments" (all of these except one are categories of the law and commandments called The Ten Commandments and under each of these categories are grouped 613 other laws)?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua just referring to the Ten Commandments or is there something we as Non-Jews unacquainted with Yeshua's religion are missing in this teaching?**

**It may amaze you but upon my study of Biblical Judaism I have discovered that each Tablet of the Law was separated by commandments between man and God and between man and man. In other words, the First Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates to God according to God's commandments, and the Second Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates with mankind. But more than that, each of the Ten Commandments is best understood as categories consisting of many commandments within the 613 Commandments grouped under each of the ten headings. So in effect, when Yeshua tells this man "thou salt not steal" he is telling the man to obey all the different facets of the broad commandment, because under such a heading the Bible enumerates the various ways such a commandments can be kept and broken.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua teaching that eternal life and salvation in Heaven is connected to keeping and observing the Laws of God? The answer to that question is yes.**

**There you have it. The way to eternal life for both the Jew and the Non-Jew and salvation in heaven, according**

**to Yeshua, is living like a good Jew and submitting to the laws of the commandments of God. These detailed instructions by Yeshua are plainly presented.**

**Notice that in the following verses the man asks what more he needed do. And Yeshua replies, to be perfect he should sell everything he owns and give it to the poor and receive treasure in heaven: "and come and follow me." The man, on hearing this, leaves disturbed because he has great wealth and doesn't want to lose it. There is no indication that the "follow me" means anything else but to accompany Yeshua penniless. The message remains intact that observing Torah law gives eternal life. Perfection is another story.**

**Mark 12: 28-31 (Matthew 22:36-40), ". . . Which is the first (great commandment in the law) commandment of all? And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets)."**

**So, Yeshua selected Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18 as the greatest two laws. This was very Jewish of him, as most rabbis would completely agree, especially Rabbi Hillel. He chose the Shema prayer, the Jew's affirmation of God's oneness and dedication to love of Him together with Judaism's great moral teaching of loving people with the love you have for yourself. What could be more indicative of the essence of Judaism?**

**Luke 10:25-28, ". . . Master, what shall I *do* to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him. Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."**

**Answer for yourself: Did you make the connection between "inherit eternal life" and "thou shalt live" as also referring to eternal life? I hope you did because this is typical of Hebrew parallelism.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you noticed that in Luke 10:25-28, Matthew 19:16-19, Mark 10:17-19, and Luke 18:18-20 something very important is repeated?**

**Answer for yourself: What is it?**

**Namely, that possessing and inheriting eternal life is always connected with *doing something……* *not with believing something!***

**Answer for yourself: How does Luke 10:25-28 teach us more than we learn from Mark 12:28-31?**

**The writer of the Gospel of Luke goes one step further than the just given, Mark 12:28-31. Here we have the New Testament teaching us of the indisputable link between the *"doing"* of the commandments of God and eternal life, which is the reward for obeying them.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Yeshua is teaching in the New Testament that eternal life is to be taught from the Law……the same Law that tells us "what to do" and what you most likely have been told has passed away or which you are no longer under?**

**It is evident that Yeshua said, in the New Testament no less, that the law of Moses, as epitomized in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, is the pathway to personal salvation and eternal life. Yes, Yeshua said this as found in the New Testament. Let us continue.**

**Mark 12:32-34, "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart (alone as the one God), and with all the**

**understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ... Yeshua . . . said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God . . ."**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that acknowledging the oneness of God, and not the Trinity or triuneness of God, is connected with the reward of God's kingdom and eternal life?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you likewise notice that loving God and one's neighbor who is created in the likeness of God is connected with inheriting God's eternal life?**

**I John 5:3, "For this is the love of [for] God, *that we keep his commandments*: and his commandments are not grievous**

**Answer for yourself: Since we are told that loving God is connected to eternal life, did you notice the New Testament teaches *"how" the love for God is to be manifested?***

**Answer for yourself: Does the New Testament teach us that loving God is manifested through the keeping of the 613 commandments? It sure does!**

**This is a straight follow-through of Mark 12:28-31, which connects the acknowledgment of the oneness of God, loving Him, and loving ones neighbor as written in the law, with the reward of God's kingdom. Burnt offerings and sacrifices are secondary to the commandments in Judaism and always have been. With no Temple, there is no doubt about this low degree of importance. This passage demonstrates Yeshua' Judaism through and through. Notice likewise that the term "Master" means good teacher, not anything more.**

**Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."**

**If you thought that "do unto others" is not Judaic or that it is different from "love your neighbor as yourself" you see here that it is totally of Jewish origin. Yeshua declared that it is the law and the prophets. It is Judaic.**

**Luke 11:28, ". . . blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."**

**Notice also with me that when the writer of Luke penned this verse, that there was not a New Testament in existence and that the only possible identity we can give to "the word of God" is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings….the Jewish Bible.**

**Matthew 7:21, "Not every one . . . shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."**

**Again we find the expressed will of the Father in the Law, Prophets, and Writings…the Jewish Bible.**

**Matthew 3:15, ". . . it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness . . ."**

**These powerful statements are tucked in between verses which emphasize other ideas. But they can stand alone. And, standing alone they are Judaism's own. Yeshua believed that the will of God is revealed in the word of God, the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures we learn the law of Moses (Torah) and the Prophets. Thereby, we can perform righteousness as God desires by adhering to what they teach. This Yeshua believed.**

**Luke 19:8-9, ". . . half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Yeshua said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham."**

**What comes next is very important to keep your ears open. It appears that Yeshua believed that even a partial fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah is sufficient to be accepted by God. In the above verse it is recorded for us that Zaccheus repented by observing 2 commandments. In fact, as taught by**

**Yeshua, even by rectifying transgression of the Torah's laws and doing good deeds a person is deserving of salvation. As Jews trust, *it is the trying to please God, it is the effort, not the success in total compliance with God's ordinances which is required of us to be righteous and gains us salvation.***

**Answer for yourself: How confident should we feel about our salvation if we have followed teachings that state that obedience of the law or the striving to observe the laws and commandments of God don't matter any longer because we are saved by "grace" or that this same law that Yeshua connects with eternal life has been taught to us as if it has passed away and of little importance in our lives any longer?**

**Answer for yourself: Are we absolved by God to not try to choose those things to please Him by keeping His commandments? Is this conduct really connected to eternal life as Yeshua taught, or is he wrong and Paul right?**

**All the more reason to study to learn how to acquire mitzvoth and commandments, thereby taking upon yourself the yoke of the Kingdom of God. Such obedience to commandments is both pleasing to God as well as our demonstration of our love for Him and our fellow man. To do otherwise is not to love God, but rather, show our ambivalence toward Him and our neighbor.**

**Luke 13:28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when *ye* shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."**

**Keep your ears open for this as well. Here Yeshua said that the fathers of Judaism and the goodly Hebrew prophets are all accepted into the kingdom of God. Evidently, good Jews need nothing more than the Hebrew religion for life eternal in Yeshua' own belief.**

Now for the hard part. ***Notice that Yeshua also said that many of his followers (the "ye" in the above verse) will not get into God's kingdom and inherit eternal life and salvation because of their sinfulness.***

**Answer for yourself: Does this same New Testament teach that "transgression of the law is sin"? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice what is missing from the above words of Yeshua?**

***There is no Pauline religious belief system mentioned as a means of salvation for the followers of Yeshua!***

***There is no Christological "belief" presented here as an antidote for spiritual wickedness for mankind.***

***There is no "easy believeism" taught by Yeshua or his Apostles as a way to eternal life; on the contrary, every time he and the other Apostles emphasize the same thing; namely an earnest attempt to live by the commandments and laws of God for eternal life!***

***If you have paid attention so far in this article I have shown you repeatedly that Yeshua repeatedly connects eternal life with keeping and observing the Law and Commandments of God.***

***Nowhere does Yeshua teach that a belief "in him" brings for its adherents eternal life! In fact he teaches just the opposite!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***

**John 4:22, "(to Samaritan) Ye worship ye know not what: *we* (the Jewish people) know what we worship: *for salvation is of the Jews."***

**Yeshua "worships" what Jews worship, namely God.**

**Answer for yourself: Salvation is of whom…the Jews (Jewish theology) or the Christians (Christian theology)?**

**This passage from John 4:22 is even more startling when one realizes that the Samaritan woman who is part Non-Jew mixed with Jewish heritage and ancestry. In other words, she is a mixture; not only of blood line but religious teaching as well. She is a perfect example of the Christian today who follows Paul instead of Yeshua. He has part right and part wrong.**

**Lets look at Paul where he get some things correct.**

**I Corinthians 6:9-10, (Paul) "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."**

**Answer for yourself: In this passage are you aware that Paul is in full agreement with Yeshua and his teachings on eternal life?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that there are commandments in the Torah forbidding each of the above conducts?**

**Although Paul adds some of his own ideas, the listing of "thou shalt nots" is derived from the commandments. He stresses what he considers unrighteousness and Paul says that transgression of the Law prevents people from earning reward of heaven. Paul, here, reveals his faith in the teachings of the Torah and its stance on eternal life. Paul is in agreement with Yeshua and the other Apostles and their teachings on inheriting eternal life. So far so good.**

**But I wish I could end here but I cannot. In the next article we will look intently to where Paul deviates from and teaches against Yeshua's teachings concerning eternal life. This exercise will be difficult for many, but as I have tried to show you, such an exercise to recover truth is very necessary because your eternal life is dependent upon whom you believe and follow….Yeshua or Paul. More to follow in the conclusion to this article. Let us now look at Paul's Salvation Message and see if it agrees with what you just read.**

**Shalom.**

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# WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #2

## EXAMINING WHERE PAUL DEPARTS FROM YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

**Paul shaped the Gentile Church after 70 C.E. in a manner which stripped away all links to Judaism and cursed it at the same time. The New Testament in places says Judaism is bad and abandoned by God, while Christianity is good and beloved. In other places the New Testament teaches just the opposite as you were shown in article one of this series. In places the New Testament says the law of Moses is not valid and the Covenant is dead for the Jews. Instead of Moses being taught to all mankind, Paul teaches that the Church's laws and the existing Covenant is dead for the Jews as well as Non-Jews. Instead, the Church's laws and the New Covenant take their place. While Paul advanced separation from Judaism, Yeshua announced Judaism's greatness. The same New Testament in which you just saw Yeshua promote Judaism, in other places debases Judaism through Paul. I just showed you that Yeshua was a practicing, believing Jew who taught faithfulness to his religion's Torah and the Jewish way of salvation. Yeshua affirmed Torah, Moses, and the Prophets as the way to God and eternal life. He and his family all observed the Jewish customs, holidays, and Saturday Sabbath in the synagogue. Yeshua said personal salvation is obtained through Judaism and not another way. In fact Yeshua would command that such teachings be taken into all the world whereby all Non-Jews be taught to "observe those things" Yeshua had commanded of his followers. Paul and his brand of Christianity, in contradiction to all that had been both believed and taught before by Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua, has announced a new way to salvation, through belief in Yeshua' vicarious atonement for sins and resurrection, not through faith in God and obedience to Him through His commandments, but through belief in Yeshua's death for sins and resurrection from death.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you find just one time where Yeshua teaches the same salvation doctrine as espoused by Paul?**

**What I ask you to do is keep the teachings of Yeshua in focus as you read Paul. The New Testament, in places, contradicts itself. That is a fact. You must be sharp enough to see it for yourself when you read. No matter what Paul says he cannot invalidate Yeshua's own words in the same book. It is a matter of who you will believe. If you listen to Yeshua, as I have laid out for you, you see that he proclaimed continually Judaism's eternal truths. Paul will not. Now let us look at Paul.**

## PAUL CONTRADICTS HIMSELF….DID YOU EVER SEE IT BEFORE?

**What is the most perplexing for me when studying Paul is that he is not consistent in what he says. Most of you have never probably seen this but I will in the remaining pages attempt to reveal to you the contradictions that come from the mouth and pen of Paul regarding salvation. When we look at Yeshua his message is consistent**

**with what has always been taught by Moses and the Prophets. But with Paul we have another matter because he won't always agree with what he has said before. But if you are not sharp in your Bible study you can easily overlook such things. Let us begin out critical examination of the message of Paul on salvation.**

**Remembering what Yeshua just said about eternal life and observance of the commandments let us contrast Paul's view on the matter.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 2:13 agree or disagree with what Yeshua has said about eternal life and the observance of the commandments of God? Well, lets read it and see.**

**Romans 2:13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, *but the doers of the law shall be justified.***

**So far so good. Paul in this verse agrees with the message of Yeshua regarding acceptance and eternal life with God..**

**But just wait. Now on the back of the same page in my Bible where the above verse was quoted from Paul, we see *Paul writes something totally different and contradictory to the teachings of Yeshua in Romans 3:28:***

**Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith *without* the deeds of the law.**

**Answer for yourself: In light of what I just showed you can you justify Paul's quick turn-around on this doctrinal stance so quickly, let alone a change in the same epistle?**

**Notice that within the space of 44 verses Paul reverses completely his stance on justification and righteousness through obedience to the law and commandments of God. Just 44 verses!**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach "doing the Law" for justification AFTER THE CROSS in Romans 2:13? DEFINITELY YES!**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul contradict himself in Romans 3:28? DEFINITELY YES!**

**Answer for yourself: So what are we to believe in the face of such contradictions of Paul when contrasted with the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles which teach otherwise than Paul?**

**Answer for yourself: Seeing this material for yourself, who are you going to believe for your salvation….Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets and their message of salvation or Paul and his message whatever it is in its final form?**

**I Corinthians 6:11**

**And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Yeshua, and by the Spirit of our God.**

**Please take note that the above verse says that those who "were" transgressors had been helped by the Christologic message of Paul and belief in his gospel which taught justification of the unGodly through belief in the death and resurrection of Yeshua for eternal life.**

**Answer for yourself: How did that happen?**

**Let us understand what is really being said by Paul in this verse. Let us remember that Paul has just previously taught in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that the heathen who are guilty of the transgression of the Laws of God is led to death and separation from God, let alone the loss of eternal life. Having understood this, then we can understand his message intended for Non-Jews whereby he uses "Yeshua" literally as bait to get the Non-Jew to**

**believe in "Paul's Yeshua" as a way for their eternal life. Let us understand that Paul used cunning (become all things to all men in order to win some) in not telling the heathen he has to accept the Torah right off the bat, but rather shrewdly uses this "Pauline Yeshua" and relaxation of the Torah in his effort to win converts from the heathen gradually. Because Paul's adherents among the Non-Jews, in patterning themselves after such a Jewish Rabbi and his ethical teachings, would gradually develop lives of ethical and moral conduct which would assure that they *become more Godly than before. Such is repentance which is the first step in coming to God. Of course, if you give up evil you are closer to God, Christianity's way, Judaism's way, or any other way.***

**But there is one important difference from those who Paul was attempting to teach and you…the reader of this article. You are not like the heathen, but rather, most likely have been raised in church most of your life. With your religious background and your love for God most of your life what excuse do we have not to obey God fully and choose those things which please him which I have demonstrated is His Law?**

**Luke 1:46-47,50-55, "And Mary said, My soul Both magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."**

**Answer for yourself: Did Mary, Yeshua' mother, call the God of Judaism, the same God who gave her People the Torah for salvation her Savior or did she, based on her new revelation, call her son Yeshua the "new" Savior?**

**Mary knew what most Christians don't. That's because today's Christians have read and believe Paul more than the Gospels. God alone is the Savior not Yeshua or His Messiah. Hence, Jews have salvation by God the Father and need no second or alternate source of salvation. She spoke of God's greatness and His help of His servant, Israel. She spoke of God's message to Abraham's children, that the Covenant is eternal. This was the understanding of Mary after she was allegedly informed that she would have, according to the New Testament, a miraculous virgin birth and that the child would be the Messiah. As you surely can see, she spoke as a traditional, believing Jewish person, not the holy figure of Christianity.**

**Luke 1:6, (Luke) "And they (Zacharias and Elizabeth) *were both righteous before God*, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."**

**Answer for yourself: According to the New Testament does "walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord" allow a person to be "blameless" before God? It sure does.**

**Jews as well as Non-Jews can be free of sin, blameless, following the law of Moses, as exemplified by these two people. Therefore, we know according to the New Testament witness that the law does give justification for eternal life.**

**Again let us see what Paul has to say on the matter.**

**Romans 4:3, (Paul) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."**

**Answer for yourself: You most likely have heard this passage your whole life. But do you know what believing truly consists of as spoken of in this verse?**

**Believe without response, or as James said it "faith without works is dead" is the meaning of the passage. Abraham believed God according to the revelation of God and RESPONDED because of that belief. He took his son to Mount Moriah to be offered to God. Abraham had faith and he had a concrete response to that faith.**

**Consequently, righteousness in God's eyes is believing God's instructions and *doing as God commands*. In Abraham's situation, it was offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice. In our situation, it *is obeying and following God's commandments* in His Torah and His laws, *not just believing they exist*.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you find that following God's commandments somewhat difficult or foolish to keep and observe since the vast majority of Christianity today teaches because of Paul that the Christian is no longer under the law but under a grace which allows him to break and not keep these laws at will?**

**Lets see what Paul has to say about being righteous and walking in the commandments and ordinances of God.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this Paul's doctrine as well and does he agree with Yeshua and the Apostles on this major issue? No, again we see where Paul contradicted the teachings of Yeshua.**

**Rom 3:20-22 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Yeshua Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:**

**Remembering what you previously read in the first article concerning the teachings of Yeshua, let us examine closely the above passage from Paul for contradictions to what both Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets taught.**

1. **Moses (the Law) and Prophets NEVER taught that obedience of God's laws did not justify, in fact it was just the opposite they taught; namely, that obedience to the laws of God does justify.**
2. **Moses (the Law) and the Prophets NEVER taught that righteousness existed apart from obedience to the laws of God, in fact they taught just the opposite.**
3. **Paul discounts what Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua all taught and held in common, and substitutes his own theology that replaces 4000 years of Biblical Truth with a "BUT NOW" theology of justification before God through belief in Yeshua' death and resurrection.**

**Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe? What do the other Apostles have to say?**

**I John 5:2-3, (John) ". . . we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."**

**Earlier I stated that we love God by keeping his commandments. Now we see the second phase of the Greatest Commandment: loving His children and our neighbors. Notice also that ironically only by loving our neighbor are we actually loving God! Such loving of God and our neighbor requires fidelity to His laws, which are not hard to bear or perform. So, we read here in the New Testament that the commandments of the Torah are to be kept and can be kept. These laws should be observed to demonstrate our love of God and our fellow man.**

**Answer for yourself: Can I obey literally all of God's laws?**

**It may be beyond human ability to perform all our duties to God, always and perfectly. But, God gave the commandments which are not hard to uphold, when you use all your good intentions with all your heart. *God's laws require your effort, not perfection.***

**Again let us look at Paul.**

**Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Yeshua**

**Again you should notice Paul is teaching a completely different message from what Yeshua, Moses, Prophets, and the Apostles taught. Again Paul stands alone in his belief. No where is any of Paul's theology can we find references to what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets or other Apostles taught.**

**Rom 10:9-16**

**9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

**Again we see that Paul has a different way of salvation from what was taught by Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles as demonstrated in the first article in this series. Paul stresses "faith only" for righteousness and not what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the other Apostles taught; namely walking in the commandments of God for righteousness.**

**Answer for yourself: Who are you going to trust for correct teaching for eternal life…Paul or Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles?**

**If you are honest with yourself up to now I have repeatedly shown you that Yeshua's message revolved around keeping the Commandments and ordinances of God. Yeshua both taught and knew for certain that love for God and those created in His image could only be accomplished by adhering to a standard of righteousness (God's laws) set by God and not by man. Thus the need and availability of God's laws and commandments, which when earnestly attempted to keep produces acceptance and salvation. *Remember God requires our effort and not our perfection.***

**Again look at Paul and his views on the law.**

**Romans 7:12,14,16,22, (Paul) "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. For we know that the law is spiritual: . . . I consent unto the law that it is good. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:"**

**I Timothy 1:8, (Paul) "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;"**

**Answer for yourself: Does it stand to reason that God would need to replace something that is holy, just, spiritual, and good?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul even said that he delights in the law of God after the inward spirit?**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17, (Paul) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that when Paul wrote this in his letter to Timothy that there was only the Jewish Scriptures (Law, Prophets, Writings) in existence and that the New Testament would not be canonized till 397 A.D. (almost 300 years later)?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you also aware that Paul is saying that the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings are, at the time of writing of this epistle which is around 30 years after Yeshua's death, profitable for DOCTRINE, REPROOF, CORRECTION, AND INSTRUCTION?**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that something that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction for the first church is considered passed away by today's church?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul's writings and his theology were not, even by him, considered**

**Scripture?**

**You should not find these facts surprising since the creation of a New Testament or the creation of an alternate view of salvation and how to attain it was the furthermost thing from anyone's mind at this time….except Paul's.**

**I Peter 1:25, (Peter) "But the word of the Lord (the Law, Prophets, and Writings) endureth for ever...."**

**Understanding when Peter wrote this Paul's teachings were very limited in scope and accepted by only a few. In fact scholars today teach us that in no time during Paul's life did he have over 50 adherents to his message. In fact Paul would later say "all in Asia have forsaken me." All in Asia? This again shows you his message had a very limited scope since men from James continually followed him around to "undo" his teachings. Thus you can better understand why Paul was required to appear before James twice in his life. Literally this was to answer charges as seen in Acts 21:21: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."**

**What I have demonstrated to you in this article is that Yeshua continually walked after the customs of Moses and the Prophets. Paul did not. Tragically we have grown up in Churches which did not follow Yeshua, the Prophets, or the customs as well. We grew up most likely in Churches that followed Paul and literally oppose the teachings of Yeshua, the Prophets, and the Apostles.**

**Answer for yourself: How are we to reconcile that the Law endures forever but your church teaches that Christ is the end of the Law and that the Law has ceased and that we are no longer under the Law but grace?**

**Amazingly, the verses presented above from the pen of the Apostle Paul and Peter affirm the validity of the laws and the commandments of the Torah. They are described as sacred and beneficial, effective and everlasting. So you must face the fact that after the cross Paul at one time believed the laws of God to be holy, just, spiritual and good. So did Peter for that matter.**

**Stop here and ask yourself this:**

**Answer for yourself: If the Torah is all these things of God, shouldn't the laws be performed and Biblical Judaism, which is the embodiment of such laws, be observed by all Jews and Non-Jews?**

**Romans 10:5, (Paul) "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall *live* by them."**

**Answer for yourself: Did you again notice that the Apostle Paul states in agreement with Moses that "righteousness is of the law" and "that those do those things in the law" shall "live" by them (eternal life)?**

**But again another conflict of Paul is seen below.**

**Romans 3: 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

**Answer for yourself: How are we to understand Paul's comments about a righteousness "without the law" in light of Yeshua's teachings that connect all righteousness with observance of the commandments?**

**Answer for yourself: How do you reconcile that Paul speaks of "righteousness *without* the law" in Romans 3:21 and "righteousness *which is of* the law" in Romans 10:5?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you willing to trust contradictions like this from Paul for your eternal life?**

**Answer for yourself: Although we are warned by Paul not to believe another "gospel," is it not evident to you**

**that in comparison to Yeshua and his message about eternal life that ironically it is Paul who teaches "another gospel"?**

**Answer for yourself: Which of the two teachings are we to trust for our eternal life as taught by Paul…."the man which doeth those things (law) shall live (eternal life) by them" [Romans 10:5] or [Rom 10:9] "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"?**

**The Hebrew Bible teaches that the Torah's laws lead to virtue, which is rewarded by everlasting life. Paul, in this passage from Romans 10:5 admits that this is the message of Moses in the Holy Scriptures, who communicated God's will to the Hebrew people. Then he contradicts again this only 4 verses later!**

**James 5:16, (James) ". . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."**

**I John 3:22, (John) "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."**

**Answer for yourself: Could some of our prayers not being answered and our lack of receiving what we ask of God be because we believe we are under grace and not under the law and commandments of God and don't attempt to know let alone keep as many of them as possible?**

**These two verses, from two different Apostles, show that keeping commandments and being righteous are connected. Both lead to God's hearing us, being pleased, and helping us. The verse quoted is very Judaic in nature, and that's a fact.**

**James 2:8, (James) "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:"**

**Answer for yourself: Is James telling us we "do well" if we fulfill and keep the law? Sure is.**

**A person is good if he obeys the golden rule as given in the law of Moses.**

**James 1:27, (James) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."**

**Here is the golden rule made specific and said to be the basis of religious requirements. Also, to be pure from worldly evils in general makes for a religious person. These are Jewish ideas, totally.**

**Let us look again at Paul.**

**Galatians 3:21, (Paul) "Is the law then against the promise of God ? God forbid: for*if* there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."**

**Here is where you have to read close as well as remember what you have already learned from reading Yeshua and the other Apostles regarding the law and its connection with eternal life. Strange as it may be to read, Paul is, in the first part of the verse anyway, seemingly lending support to the validity of the law of Moses. Now for a problem which most fail to grasp its significance. Paul is double-minded. Remember I told you that he contradicts not only himself but Yeshua and the other Apostles? Here again is another place where Paul deviates from the message of the other Apostles as well as the early church. For Paul says *"if"* the law could be effective Moses' law would suffice for salvation. Paul is in reality stating that it is his personal feeling that no such law exists which is connected to salvation. For Paul the condition "if such a law existed" indicates that such a law and condition does not exist…at least for Paul!**

**Answer for yourself: What? Is this a complete reversal by Paul of what he has said previously in some of his other epistles let alone a complete contradiction of the teaching of Yeshua and the other Apostles? It sure is.**

**Answer for yourself: Well, have you with your own eyes earlier in this article already seen that Yeshua said that keeping the commandments is the path to salvation and the law is effective to this end? If you read the article you have. This produces quite a dilemma for the Christian.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul agree or disagree with the teachings of Yeshua regarding salvation and eternal life? He does not!**

**Therefore, Paul, if he "believes" Yeshua, must conclude that righteousness is obtained by one's effort to follow and pattern one's life after the Scriptural laws. But this is not the message of Paul therefore we must question if Paul really "believed in Yeshua."**

***Notice that Paul actually contradicts Yeshua on this essential matter and, in effect, created Christianity's separation from its Hebraic roots in Judaism.***

**Paul claims that sin is not overcome, but is created, by the law. Ironically, it is Paul's teaching, not Yeshua', which invalidated the law for the budding Church. *Such destroys the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles!***

# WERE WE WARNED ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE PAUL BY YESHUA? AND HAVE WE HEEDED THE WARNING?

**Let's read what Yeshua said about this kind of opposition. In Matthew 10:24 (Luke 6:40) (John 13:16) Yeshua said, "The disciple (Paul) is not above his master (Yeshua), nor the servant (Paul) above his lord (Yeshua)."**

**Answer for yourself: So we ask, whose statements take precedence…Yeshua's or Paul's?**

**Answer for yourself: Who is to be believed…Yeshua or Paul?**

**You have to decide that for yourself. We only desire to lay the materials out for you in such a way that you can make an intelligent decision.**

**Answer for yourself: What will you trust for your salvation…the message of Yeshua or Paul?**

**Answer for yourself: Which is truly linked to eternal life and God's salvation…..Christologics (believing in Yeshua) or Judaics (following the faith of Yeshua)?**

**Answer for yourself: What is the real message of salvation of God since the New Testament teaches two ways which are mutually exclusive of each other…..faith in Yeshua or adopting the faith of Yeshua?**

**Let me warn and encourage all of our readers that if you should "believe" on Yeshua to be saved, believe his teachings about the eternal and effective holy law of God revealed by Moses and begin to do them. Begin a life before God where you tell Him that His laws and commandments are important to you and that you choose to try to do them to the best of your ability because you know they please Him. Begin to live by as many as possible for in them you demonstrate your love of God and those created in His image. *And you will be saved as a Jew or a Non-Jew.***

**Paul also writes as follows:**

**Romans 14:14, (Paul) "I know. . . that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."**

**Certainly, this is true. Jews consider things unclean because God announced it in the Torah, not because they are unclean of themselves. The law of kashruth (kosher) is God's law, as detailed by those who seek Him. God's ordinances create uncleanliness, not the thing itself. And Jews and Non-Jews who want to please God and get close to Him keep the kosher laws. This is what God desires of us.**

**Romans 3:1-2, (Paul) "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."**

**Romans 9:4, Romans 10:2, (Paul) "Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God . . ."**

**Romans 11:29, (Paul) "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."**

**Acts 2:5 (Author) "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men . . ."**

**Jews have a fervor for God and are devout, said Paul. In other words, Biblical Judaism promoted enthusiasm for God. Jews were given the Covenant, the law, the prophets, and the promises. Jews minister to God by being His Chosen People. There is benefit, much benefit, in being Jewish. Paul even bolsters the firm foundation of the Torah, God's gift, lasting for eternity, without God changing His mind, without repenting of His Torah. That is what Paul actually said.**

**Notice that Paul, however, in a complete reversal of what he said elsewhere, is recorded to having believed that all these positive features of being Jewish are canceled, and of no avail, due to the Jew's lack of belief in Yeshua the Christ. We will leave Paul's reasoning and reversal to others. Instead, we ask you to keep in mind his positive appreciation of Judaism. And also remember that Yeshua said, in effect, that Judaism is of God. Yeshua, himself, taught that "Jews for Judaism" is the way even for the Non-Jew. We have shown abundant evidence of this in our present article.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the authority you choose, Yeshua or Paul?**

**Ephesians 6:2-3, (Paul) "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."**

**Matthew 15:4 (Mark 7:10), "For God commanded (Moses said), saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."**

**These verses are Paul's and Yeshua' utterances, condemning anyone who doesn't bestow honor upon his parents, as taken from the Ten Commandments. This means dutifully regarding them and respecting them, and implicitly honoring your heritage as well. This commandment is considered important enough to be put forward separately. Therefore, shaming your parents and their teaching by turning from them and the God of their heritage is prohibited and deserving of worldly death as well as loss of life in the hereafter. This is also what we read elsewhere in the New Testament.**

**Luke 5:37-39, "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."**

**Yeshua's saying appears to fit Judaism and its offspring, Christianity. To carry this analogy through, the new wine, Christianity, should not be placed into the old, Judaism. This, of course, is just what happened. In order for it to be good, the new should be nurtured separately. Both are then properly maintained, the old as it should be and the new as it should be. This did not occur. Sadly, the new has caused great harm to the old by claiming**

**to succeed it, while mixing with it. And the new, by so doing, has harmed itself. Isn't that the proper conclusion to be drawn? Taken one step further, Yeshua also said that those who know the old, Judaism, prefer it.**

**Answer for yourself: Shouldn't you, as a Non-Jew and most likely a follower of Yeshua, prefer it too?**

**Answer for yourself: Whose teachings will you trust to lead you to eternal life…Paul's [which are filled with contradictions of Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, the Torah, as well as the other followers and Apostles of Yeshua who knew him personally and walked with him 40 days after his resurrection], or Yeshua's [which agree totally with Moses and the Prophets and which contains not one contradiction among them]?**

**I would think having read this article it is rather obvious.**

# NOW FOR THE BIG QUESTION

**Since now you have seen for yourself that Yeshua's and Paul's way of salvation differ, then you should be asking yourself "Why"? What you will come to see if you continue your diligent search for truth is that the New Testament documents which you have relied upon since your childhood as "received from God" are no such thing at all. Upon close scrutiny you will come to find that they are a collection of both truth and error; the problem is discerning one from the other. As you have already seen we cannot have two conflicting paths to salvation. There are many other discrepancies contained within these documents; many of which go unnoticed by those who do not devote a considerable amount of time for study into these areas. We at Bet Emet Ministries have and continue to do so in order to present you, our readers, the absolute best of scholarship in these areas in hopes you will be led to the truth before you die. Your rewards and standing in the World to Come hinges upon it. We realize that the reason for so much confusion today in the Christian community stems for the multiple contradictions within the New Testament which blurs "the faith once given to the saints". It is our hope by revealing to you the hundreds of misquotations of the Jewish Scriptures, the numerous Jewish Scriptures taken out of context by the New Testament writes to serve their own anti-Semitic agendas, and the gross mistranslations contained within it as well that you might come to see the truth for yourself.....Yeshua was not a Christian and does not want you to follow such Gentile Christian doctrines that destroy the Sabbath, the Biblical Festivals, Monotheism, true righteous giving of the Tithe, true spiritual warfare, etc. Today we have a collection of writings that billions of people have accepted as "authoritative" for their faith and practice which are anything but that. If you have the courage to continue your study...you will be shocked, saddened, broken, and ashamed before you finish. You will see for yourself the greatest deception foisted upon mankind by the Roman Religious Establishment....a substitute faith that opposes what the real Yeshua believed at almost every turn of his life. You might be saying to yourself now: "those are big charges...can he prove it"? I would only ask that you prayerfully study and use the intellect that God has given you to see if what I say does not add up. You will never be sorry you did, and eternally grateful you continued in this rather difficult study. Shalom and may the LORD'S blessings overtake you.**

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# WHY THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD BOTHER HIMSELF WITH THIS JESUS-PAUL PROBLEM & THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUES

**Answer for yourself: But why does the question of Paul's relationship to Jesus matter? Historically it may be an interesting question, but is it more than that?**

## THE LEGITIMACY OF PAULINE AND TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY

**Many people perceive it as very important indeed: The conclusion that Paul was effectively the founder of a new religion may not unreasonably be seen as devastating for Christian faith, since it turns out that the Christian church has based its doctrine and life not on Jesus, as it has mistakenly claimed, but on Paul and his misinterpretation of Jesus.**

***If*** **it can be proven beyond any doubt that Paul was not trying to be faithful to Jesus - hence his apparent lack of interest in Jesus and his faith and his teachings - and that Paul's teachings and "gospel" is a different religion from that of Jesus and not a legitimate development of it, then such an accusation has fatal implications to the authority and credibility of much that is taught in the Christian faith as both a way of accepted life before God let alone thy way that will assure one's acceptance after death. If it can be proven that Paul was influenced by Greek ideas and the Greek mystery religions, borrowed ideas from these mystery religions thereby inventing the "myth" of Jesus' divinity and sacrificial death and was also the "creator of the eucharist" in his insidious synthesis of Gentile pagan religions in his presentation of "his gospel" instead of the "gospel of Jesus to the Gentile nations of the world, then the Christian has something rather serious to consider; yet worry about.**

**The Eternal consequences of such a situation possibly being true should scare the life of you if you are a traditional Christian who knows no more than to go to church on Sunday because it was what you were taught to do as a child. I shudder to even contemplate what awaits a Pauline believer if such an accusation can be proven right; namely, that Paul altered the faith of Moses and changed the faith of Jesus as it went into all the world. Understand that such a "charge" on my part is not original with me but you have heard it before and most likely never let it dawn on you the implications of such a charge.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever read this passage from acts before?**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they (the Jewish people) are informed of thee, that thou (Paul) teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses,***

***saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice the nature of the charge brought against Paul? His teachings of his gospel (called by Paul "my gospel) were such that he had to come and defend such charges personally before the "Messianic Sanhedrin" headed by James who was the chief pastor of Jesus' church in Jerusalem.**

- **Rom 2:16 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. (KJV)**
- **Rom 16:25 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel,**
- **2 Tim 2:8 8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:**

**Paul had been teaching not only the Gentiles but the Jews to forsake Moses. This was Paul's Gospel where the Law and Commandments of Moses had been replaced by Paul's unique revelation on the Damascus Road.**

**Let us examine the word used for "forsake" as taken from the Greek from both Strong's Concordance and Thayer's Greek Lexicon:**

**646 apostasia (ap-os-tas-ee'-ah); feminine of the same as 647; defection from truth (properly, the state) ["apostasy"]: KJV-- falling away, forsake.**

**646 apostasia- a falling away, a defection, an apostasy 575 apo-**

**1) used of separation**

- **a) used of local separation, after verbs of motion from a place that is, of departing, of fleeing**
- **b) used of separation of a part from the whole where of a whole some part is taken**
- **c) used of any kind of separation of one thing from another by which the union or fellowship of the two is destroyed**
- **d) used of a state of separation, that is, of distance: physical: used of distance of place temporal: used of distance of time**

***Paul was charged with apostasy from Moses and Biblical Judaism. That means he was charged with not teaching the truth (defection from truth as the word says). Paul was not teaching the truth as James, the Jerusalem Church, and Jesus both "believed and knew" it!***

**Answer for yourself: Why was teaching the truth so important for James and the Jerusalem church? Again if we go to the word we see within it the concept of "separation" and Israel had been called to be a Royal Priesthood to reach the Gentile nations whereby they would become a part of the Israel of God. Yes, the Jews had their unique Covenant with 613 Commandments and Laws within it that were their Covenant stipulations whereby obedience to such Laws were their guarantee of right standing before God. Likewise, the non-Jews had their own Covenant with God where 66 of these same Laws (Laws of Noah) applied to them and when obeyed they also could find right standing before God. When both the Jew and the Gentile lived in Covenant obedience to the Commandments and Laws and Covenant Stipulations then there would not be a separation among these peoples; rather, the two sticks in Joseph's hands become one. Both the Jews and Gentiles are to have the same testimony before God. In case you don't know this then read the Prophets where in the world to come the nations (Gentiles) are to come up to Zion, not Tulsa or TBN, and the Torah is to come to them from Zion and not Pauline epistles. There is a serious problem with Paul and what he was teaching and James had to stop it as quickly as possible after being presented with the facts regarding Paul and his**

misrepresentation of Jesus and what he stood for was reported to him. **Paul had been warned once before but we only have the perverted Galatians account which is one sided to say the least. Galatians was written after his visit and correction once before. Now after Acts 15 when he and others were given letters of doctrine and instruction to take to Asia Minor to strengthen the churches with Apostolic Doctrine and the Laws of Noah we see Paul again will begin to compromise such doctrine and teach "my gospel" in order to find acceptance among the non-Jews since it can be proven he was a rejected Sadducee before becoming a rejected Pharisee as well. Paul's story is a sad one but up to now you only thought we had the "one account" of him in this "one book" called the New Testament in which he wrote 2/3 of it. It is time to wake up to what exists in this world which brings such an self-glorifying autobiography into grave doubt.**

**This accusation that Paul was teaching "apostasy" in the eyes of the Jerusalem church, if provable, certainly has serious implications for Christian faith. Dear ones it can be proven!**

**Answer for yourself: Can we prove it however? Keep reading.**

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# THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH...HISTORICAL OR MYTHICAL?

**In all honesty, whether the accusation (that Christianity is more mythical than historical), if sustained, discredits Christian faith and the Christian church altogether may depend in part on how wide the gulf between Jesus and Paul is seen to be, but also on how important the historical Jesus is seen to be for faith. Many Jewish and Christian Scholars, along with ordinary Christians, would consider that the historical Jesus is by definition all-important for Christian faith. The vast majority of believing Christians today have not the slighest idea concerning the difference between "the Christ of faith" and "the Jesus of history."**

**If it turns out that Paul was not very interested in the historical Jesus, then traditional assumptions about the historical nature and basis of Christian faith are put in jeopardy. Christians traditionally have claimed that the distinctive thing about Christian faith is its historical basis: Its so-called 'particularity' lies in its assertion that God's salvation came to humanity in particular historical events - Christ '"as handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification" according again to Paul and "his gospel" (Rom 4:25). Christianity is not myth or philosophy or a system of ethics but a historical revelation. If, however, it turns out that Paul, as the first author of the NT and the most influential exponent of Christian faith in the early church, did not see the history of Jesus as especially important, then we will have to conclude that our view of Christian faith was not that of many of the earliest Christians, since Paul was surely not alone in his attitudes.**

***If Paul, perhaps influenced by the Greek mystery religions, was interested in the proclamation of a dying and rising Christ rather than in the history of Jesus, then we may be forced to conclude that early Christianity was more mythological and less historical than we supposed.***

**This is the sort of conclusion reached by a host of scholars in the last centuries. S. G. Wilson in his article surveying the history of recent Jesus-Paul study sums it up for us when he finds himself forced by the meager evidence for Paul's interest in Jesus to come to this theological conclusion:**

***Driven by reflection on both the theory and practice of our historical craft to the view that there is little we can confidently assert apart from the mere fact of Jesus' life and death, we are forced to fall back on a mythological figure (the Christ of faith, Pauline or otherwise) and adopt a position which verges on the docetic*** **(Wilson, From Jesus to Paul)**

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# DID PAUL'S DE-EMPHASIS UPON THE HUMAN JESUS AFFECT THE WRITERS OF THE GOSPELS?

**One of the biggest and most controversial questions in NT studies continues to be that of the origin and nature of the Gospels: Two centuries of critical study have clarified some matters, but there is still very wide disagreement as to whether the Gospel accounts are broadly or only marginally historical. Paul is potentially a most important witness in this case.**

**One view of Paul, as we have seen, is that he was not interested in the historical traditions of Jesus. Jesus "according to the flesh" - to quote a phrase from 2 Cor 5:16 - was unimportant to him, and he apparently knew little of Jesus' ministry (S. Wilson, Jesus and Paul, pp. 114-115).**

## IS GNOSTICISM HIDDEN IN THE WRITINGS OF PAUL...AND DID HIS WRITINGS LATER INFLUENCE THE GOSPEL WRITERS?

**We have drawn to your attention the fact that Paul mentions little if anything concerning the teachings of Jesus in his epistles and again his writings amount to 2/3 of the volume of the New Testament. Again this speaks of the gnostic influence upon Paul and the gnostic threat to "Jewish Christianity" and the true faith of God. This failure on Paul's part to emphasize Jesus' teachings stems from his Gnostic leanings in certain areas. But it is not as simple as that. Let me explain.**

**Gnosticism is not a simple subject to tackle. Religions agree that man and the world are imperfect. Where they differ is in explaining why they are so, and in what they propose should be done about it. Generally speaking, man is held to blame for the situation. There is, however, an alternate view, namely that the world was imperfect from the start, that the blame lies not with man, but with God, the Creator (Gnosticism). The process of creation by this imperfect Creator produced a world full of errors, sufferings, sickness, death, sin, etc. Within this imperfect world are imperfect men and women. Yet within mankind we find not only a perishable physical component but a spiritual component which is a fragment of the divine substance, or, to extend the light of symbolism, a "divine spark." Within mankind the "physical flesh" fights against the "spirit man" for mastery. Man is generally ignorant of the spark of divinity that resides in him, and the lower powers of creation seek to keep him ignorant by encouraging and gratifying the physical appetites and passions of the "natural" man. Unawareness and ignorance keeps mankind in the subjection to the lower evil powers of creation and it is only through knowledge (gnosis) alone that mankind can liberate himself; knowledge of the way to combat or outwit these evil powers and enable the soul to achieve reunion with God as it desires. This saving knowledge cannot be discovered in the world, the realm of darkness. This "saving knowledge" must come from the realm of light, granted either by revelation (illumination) or brought by a messenger, a transcendent savior (in this case Jesus as taught by Paul). Here is where we find the gnostic Paul.**

***Paul's gnostic Christ departs from Judaism in that he does not bring salvation from sin through faith and obedience to the Word of God as found in the Torah, Prophets, and Writings; rather, the gnostic Christ brings salvation through special knowledge which is available only to the "elect" who accept and believe certain things pertaining to him (divine gnosis/special knowledge).***

This gnostic Christ comes not to save by example where mankind sees his example of faith and obedience to the Commandments of God but rather salvation comes through secret knowledge and religious doctrines which redeem those who accept and believe such "religious truths." **Such gnostic salvation demands not contrition, obedience, and confession of sin with a life containing the fruits of repentance.** Gnostic salvations comes in "what you know" and in this instance what was needed for the nations to "know" was Paul's gospel message of the saving event found in the identity of Jesus, his death, burial, and resurrection as a "semi-divine man." This provides the impetus for evangelization of the world in hopes of spreading this "secret knowledge" about this gnostic Christ of Paul's making because they have not been told yet this "special revelation of knowledge" necessary for this salvation from this evil world. In such teaching of this gnostic Christ we find that which is central to the "salvation message" was not the Torah, the Commandments of God, obedience, confession of sin, repentance, etc. Ascent to a set of mental beliefs and religious doctrines concerning this gnostic Christ was all that was necessary for salvation and Eternal life.**One just has to have "faith" in this Jesus and the salvation story of this "resurrected" divine man. As you can see with such a "gospel" as taught by Paul the human Jesus and his teaching intended for this world is relatively not important besides all things "physical" and of the "flesh" are fruits of an imperfect God. It is best to preach and teach the "Christ of Faith" (the risen spirit man) instead of the "Historical Jesus." Because this God of the Jews failed to make a perfect world then many held God in contempt and this resulted in the repudiation of all thing "fleshly;" thus one can see that it** naturally follows that in a world where "flesh" is imperfect that it cannot become "perfect" so why fight it. Contempt for the Creator resulted in repudiation of moral principles and prohibitions and the assumption of a status above the Law, where anything is permissible.

**Answer for yourself: Now do you understand why Paul teaches that the Law has passed away?**

Thus we find the real reason for Paul attaching to the death of Jesus that men are no longer bound by the Law is because of Paul the flesh is of no importance; the spirit man is. **All of these conclusions stem from gnosticism and Paul was gnostic to the core. Jesus, in opposition to what Paul taught, continually taught repentance and submission of one's flesh to the will of God where the Commandments of God were to be loved and obeyed. Jesus, being a good Jew, understood that it was only in such a way that this world would be changed.** Again, in this regard both Jesus and Paul stand at opposite ends of the theological spectrum.

Because of this "gnostic" thought in the religious beliefs of Paul he would write in a manner concerning this Jesus where he reveals his preoccupation with the spiritual Jesus and not the human Jesus by not sharing with his reading audience the life or teachings of Jesus. If all we had available to us were the writings of Paul then we would not know almost anything about Jesus at all since Paul only related two sentences regarding what Jesus taught. This lack of importance of the "flesh" and the "human" Jesus is seen as the fruit of this particular religious belief system and, as said, Paul's gnosticism is confirmed by his almost complete silence upon the "human" Jesus and what he stood for and believed. Again what Jesus believed and taught was secondary for Paul as he was concerned only with the "spiritual Jesus" who had appeared to him according to Paul, and who, according to Paul, offered salvation to those who "knew" him and the "secret and esoteric" knowledge concerning him and his "secret salvation" which would be available only to those who understood his death in that particular way. You need to understand that this "salvation" was exclusive only to those who came to the knowledge of this "saving act" of Jesus and accepted such notions by faith. This is Paul's gospel. This "mental ascent" to this Christian religious doctrine saves

**according to this "gnostic" religious beliefs system.**

***And all the while you thought Paul's "gospel" was God's real message of salvation if you were a Christian. Now you know better.***

# ROMANS CHAPTER 7 AND 8 LIKE YOU NEVER SAW THEM BEFORE

**Answer for yourself: I know every Christian looks to Romans 7 and 8 as a high-watermark of Pauline writing where he confesses the absolute failure of his "flesh" to do what he desires to do and what he desires to do he again fails because his "flesh" lets him down. Then in Romans 8 he praises the risen "spiritual Christ" who enables him to do what is right because he "lives in him" and "empowers him" to do right where before he could not do right. On the surface the non-informed sees this as a lovely testimony of what the spirit man can do if enabled by the power of the risen Christ who dwells within him.**

**Answer for yourself: If a Christian is to give Jesus credit for the good we do, then should he get the blame when we do wrong and sin? According to Paul's idea he should. I hope you see the ridiculousness of this doctrine. If anyone knew anything about Judaism he would laugh at such a statement by Paul in Romans 7 and 8. Any 5 year of Jewish child knows that the Torah and the Commandments of God are here to train us in Godliness by developing habits of conduct for our lives since these Commandments are expressions to mankind of what God is and does and what God is not and what He does not do. When we model ourselves after them through our free will then we choose to "be ye Holy because God is Holy." We are commanded to "choose" this day whom we will serve. The question of our service, either to God or evil is ours and not Jesus'. The Torah was given to show man the way, and when he fails, and God knew he would, then this same Torah give the remedy for our failure. It is not some mystical union with a risen "spirit man" but repentance, confession of sin, prayer, almsgiving, restitution, etc. The Torah teaches us how to achieve a state of Godliness and acceptability before God without the aid of intermediaries like the Gentile nations have. Paul, if a Pharisee of Pharisees, as he states, makes then the worse confession possible for any Jew; in fact he repudiates the whole essence of Biblical Judaism in Romans 7 and 8 and nullifies the religion of Jesus and his message for Jesus' message is Torah-centered where repentance is the first step toward the Kingdom of Heaven on earth (THINK).**

**Maybe it is time to start your own personal study of Biblical Judaism, the real religion of Jesus to see what exactly the historical Jesus really believed and then give serious consideration to be come a follower of the historical Jesus instead of the Jesus of "faith" which departs from Biblical Judaism.**

**If one understands Biblical Judaism then you understand that there is only one thing wrong with Paul's analysis of the spiritual condition of mankind. His teaching in Romans 7 and 8 is in error. If Paul was a good Jew then his testimony would be the surrender of his flesh to his spirit (the spirit of God within him) whereby he submits himself to the Commandments of God and choose to serve God by obedience to the Word of God. This is something that a person is responsible for and not another "ghost" living within him. What makes this so confusing is that in places Paul teaches Biblical Judaism and repentance and in other places in the New Testament he has abandoned it for the "mystical Christ." Since all of his writings came after his encounter with this "mystical Christ" then you would think that he would not be inconsistent in his writings, but he is. He seems to have not decided one way or the other because the New Testament reveals Paul's theological dementia where he oscillates between "the Christ of Faith" and the "historical Jesus;" between Biblical Judaism and his "unique Gospel" that replaces it. Understand that with each character, "the historical Jesus" and "the Christ of faith," Paul has a separate doctrine for each and again these conflict when compared. One minute the Law is good and the next it is evil. No Jew in Judaism ever believed that they were saved by keeping the Law; rather, once saved by faith in God, not Jesus, they were obligated to live by the Law as a guide in life because it was their Covenant stipulation before God which, when obeyed, guaranteed them right standing before God.**

**Answer for yourself: Now, did you know that the famous passages often used in sermons from Romans 7 and 8 is the testimony of Gnosticism and not Judaism, the religion of Jesus, and all along you thought it was Christianity and supported by Jesus?**

## *Again in Romans 7 and 8 we have the total repudiation of the Torah and it's message of salvation to the world and Paul is behind it.*

**For Paul it was the living Christ who mattered, the Christ who died and rose and who would one day return. These ideas not only existed with Paul but were preached by him everywhere he went along with being propagated in his writings. And by best guess Paul's writings preceded the writing of the gospels by 50 years most likely. Thus we find that Paul had a demonstrable impact and influence upon the subsequent writers of the Gospels. Indeed, it is widely held that the early Gentile church generally shared Paul's outlook: Its members were fired by a consciousness of the resurrected-living Christ and by an eager expectation of his imminent return. If this picture of the early church is anywhere near the truth then it follows that the church was unlikely to have carefully preserved or transmitted the stories and sayings of the "human" Jesus; that was not their concern.Our Gospels, therefore, are not based on a historically reliable tradition but on a fluid and relatively haphazard tradition, in which stories of Jesus have become mixed up with all sorts of additional and interpretative material. Such is the conclusion of many scholars, and appeal is made to Paul as an important witness to this process (D. Wenham, Paul: Follower Of Jesus Or Founder Of Christianity, pp. 7-8)**

**This fact helps explain how pagan traditions and facets of solar and astral worship held by sun-worshipping Gentile nations are interjected into the New Testament accounts of Jesus where he is made to be a mixture of Judaism and sun-worship in his religious beliefs and teachings (both by him and others about him).**

## *The Jesus of Judaism is mixed with the Jesus of Rome in the New Testament.*

**This "New Testament Jesus" and the "Jesus of Paul" never lived and such a depiction of him, both by Paul and the later Gentile writers of the Gospels who were influenced by Paul's "non-human Jesus" only lead us astray in our search for truth concerning the historical Jesus.**

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# SOLVING THE JESUS-PAUL PROBLEM...CAN IT BE DONE?

**The traditional Christian view of Scripture as a book that speaks with one voice - God's voice - has been vigorously challenged in recent years. Scripture speaks with many voices, it is said - many different human voices, saying significantly different things. The diversity is such that, in the view of many, we cannot speak of the theology of the Bible, or even of the theology of the NT, since there are different, even contradictory, theologies in the two Testaments. Whether we can continue to speak of the unity of Scripture or even to regard the Bible as the inspired word of God is debated among scholars, with most agreeing that old definitions of the unity and inspiration of the Bible need to be replaced. The Jesus-Paul issue is a useful test-case, since there is prima facie evidence of significant diversity here. The evidence needs to be weighed before we can determine if, in the New Testament, we have a contradiction or simply divergence and development of the same idea. One you see the evidence for yourself I think you will see that the answer is without a doubt "counteraction" and not theological evolution of the same idea.**

## PROBLEMS THAT MUST BE DEALT WITH IN SOLVING THE JESUS-PAUL QUESTION: CAN IT BE DONE?

**The wide divergence of opinion among scholars about Paul's relationship to Jesus makes it clear that the Jesus-Paul question is complex, to say the least. It is complex for a large number of reasons. What never ceases to amaze me is that many Christians who write about Jesus and Paul are totally unaware of the following problems; for if they had possessed such knowledge they would not be writing what they are.**

### PROBLEMS

- **First, there is considerable scholarly confusion about what, if anything, we can know about the historical Jesus. In Christianity today we have a paradox of sorts:**
  - **We have Christian scholars who want the truth and study to find it and report it in an unbiased manner irrespective of their personal religious beliefs.**
  - **On the other hand we have the "denominational driven" pursuit of the "statue quo" where not matter what my be discovered or uncovered that might shed light upon the now existing "orthodoxy of Christianity" in such a light to expose some or much of it to be error is dismissed and not handled in an honest fashion in order to do no harm to the existing Christian orthodoxy.**

**The facts are that the Gospels and the Epistles records and purports to tell us things, but how reliable these are historically is uncertain. When one examines all the evidence both inside and outside Christian circles for the authorship, origin, authenticity, and integrity for such documents one does not come away from such an experience with any faith left in the hope and belief that such documents were written by Jews, that they were written by the followers of the Jewish Christ, or that**

the Holy Spirit had anything to do with them in the first place. **In fact such ruthless inspection and evaluation of these documents, both internally and externally, prove their Gentile authorship and at a rather late date long after the death of the last apostle. Such uncertainty obviously makes any study of Paul's relationship to Jesus difficult.**

**answer for yourself: Why is that knowledge and facts so deadly to the Christian position that it must be hidden and kept from you by orthodoxy Christianity?**

Simply because, among other things, that, if there does seem to be a connection between a story or saying of Jesus found in the Gospels and a Pauline saying, the dependence need not necessarily be from Jesus to Paul, but could be from Paul to the Jesus of the Gospels. Since the Gospels are usually thought to have been written after Paul's letters, it could well be that that these Gentile evangelists have been influenced by Paul or Pauline tradition in their portrayal of Jesus.

## *Goulder argues for extensive use of Pauline tradition by both Matthew and Luke (Goulder, Midrash and Lection, 153-170; The Evangelists' Calendar, 227-240; Luke: A New Paradigm, 129-146). Other scholars recognize occasional direct or indirect borrowing*

That means the Gospels are a continuance of Pauline ideology and theology written in the names of the apostles of Jesus in order to make it look as if Paul's gospel (my gospel) was really the message of the earliest Jewish church as well. This is simply "back-writing" ideas into the past that never were held by those who followed the living Jesus, let alone Jesus himself. Such literary creationism is simply a lying agenda to promote the beliefs of a later group which held different beliefs from that of their earlier counterparts.

**Scholars disagree not only on what goes back to Jesus, but also on the interpretation of much of the teaching given by Jesus in the Gospels. Even such a central theme as 'the kingdom of God' is understood quite differently by different scholars. Again this complicates the study of Paul's relationship to Jesus.**

- The uncertainty is not only at Jesus' end of the equation, but also at Paul's, since scholars disagree as to which of the NT letters attributed to Paul actually go back to the apostle. **The NT ascribes thirteen letters to Paul, but six of them "Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus" are regarded as pseudonymous by some scholars.**

- Scholars also disagree about the interpretation of Paul's theology. **Most of our lives we have heard the preachings so we are pretty much familiar with the Church's tradition concerning Paul and his message. However there again is a whole other side of this coin** where the very ideas both held and taught by Paul can be shown to stem completely out of Gentile pagan mystery religions which find their origin in sun-worship. These ideas are normally totally foreign to the normal Christian and even many Christian writers but when one sees how "exact quotes" as taken from pagan rituals and liturgies, let alone their theological dogmas, has been lifted out of gentile paganism and now finds it's way into the writings of Paul as he pictures Jesus in such ways. One you see this for yourself then there is little room to doubt Paul's borrowing of such pagan Gentile ideas in the selling of a Jewish Rabbi-redeemer to the Gentiles. The Jesus of Paul is made to look like and have more in common with the non-Jews' pagan religions of antiquity than Biblical Judaism.

- We are confronted with religious documents that both the Jewish people and the Christians love and cherish as their "books of authority." The problem is these books contradict each other in major religious and "messianic" positions. **Each group claims authority for their writings**

**and blames the other for corrupting the truth. We are left with the Jewish Tanakh (the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures) that reads completely different in key passages when compared with the Christian's Old Testament. Up until 1950 with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls most Christians maintained that the Jews had altered their Jewish Masoretic text to write out any and all references to Jesus. In other words the Jews were blamed with "de-Jesusizing" Jesus from their texts in response to the Christian mission. This argument could not be disproved by the Jews, besides the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures predated the oldest existing Jewish Scriptures by almost 1000 years. On the surface it seem that the older Septuagint (Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures) were to be accepted as the more correct since they were the oldest surviving copy of the Old Testament in existence in 1950. The Jews were defenseless again such logic from the Christian camps since the Christians had the highly revered LXX as supposedly taken from the Jewish Scriptures in a "miracle" translation. Passages in the Christian's Old Testament that read like the prophecy of a godman were only later quoted and applied to Jesus in the New Testament. On the surface it looked like a "lock;" that the Old Testament in the Christian Bible (thought to be a faithful and older translation of the Jewish Scriptures) had been prophesying about Jesus all along. When one consulted the Jewish Bibles in these particular passages one found that they were worded in no similar way and to the uneducated in manuscript evidences it would seem as if the Jew's were guilty of changing their Bibles to remove any references that could possibly be applied to Jesus. But when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered along with the secular writings were found which also included both copies of the Greek LXX and the Jewish Masoretic texts (which read different in these key places). What concerns us is that when these Jewish Masoretic texts which were discovered at Qumran were shown to be as old or older than the Greek translation of them were compared with the existing Jewish Masoretic texts of 900-1000 A.D. (the ones thought altered in response to Christianity) they were found to be 99.9% identical! This has a staggering impact upon all Biblical studies done in the last 2000 years. What this teaches us is that the Jews NEVER altered their Jewish texts in ways thought; rather, the Jewish Masoretic texts are older than the Greek texts found at Qumran and show that prior to the translation of the Jewish Scriptures into Greek that they read completely different than the way that they will come out when translated into the Greek by the Essenes of Alexandria. Let me say it another way. The Messianic passages in the Jewish Masoretic text found at Qumran read not like those of the Greek translation of them. The Greek translators altered them on purpose for some reason. That reason is not hard to discern when you study who the Essenes really were and what they really believed (http://bennoah1.freewebsites.com). What one finds is that the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt, in 200 B.C.E., were Hellenized to such an extent that they had move away from normative Judaism and had begun to incorporate into their practice of the faith of Moses ideas from Egyptian sun-worship where sun-godmen who died and raised were looked upon as saviors. All you had to do was partake of the supper of the godman and then "you were in Osiris/Jesus). In the theological milieu that existed in this metropolis which had the distinction of having the world's largest library and Essene University the Essenes sought to solidify their influence by obtaining a book from God as had other Jews and this new "Greek translation," which was of their own doing, will give then Divine authority over all who denied or debated their religious positions. The impact of this cannot fully be realized until you understand that EVERY quote in the New Testament and EVERY quote concerning Jesus in the New Testament is taken from the corrupted Old Testament that finds its origin in the corrupted Greek translations of the Jewish Masoretic Text. That means that every quote applied to Jesus in the New Testament finds, most likely, its genesis and origin in solar and astral worship and not in Moses, the Prophets, or the Writings (at least until they were altered). Ultimately this means that as a Christian the Jesus that you have been taught and told to trust in for Eternal Life is little more than a solar godman of the sun-worshippers of the nations. It was to these people the Jews were called by YHWH to reach with the true message of God who is ONE and not THREE and to whom Ethical Monotheism was to be taught. Instead the Gentile nations have changed little; they still have their pagan trinities. The only difference is that we have made it look as if God has given them to us . We end up believing lies and do great injustice to the real Jesus by spreading such lies in his name. Such is gross idolatry and 2.5 billion people on the planet don't know because they were never told and they never studied it out for themselves. But trust me on this: God knows!**

- **Lastly, since we have a forged religious document which we trust, then when reading it we are not trained to discern what is true from the false when reading the Old Testament and the New**

Testament. **Not everything in the Christian Old Testament and the New Testament is wrong! Not everything is wrong! But many things are and these things need to be revealed and taught to the Christians of the world in hopes that they can learn and repent when wrong. When we approach Paul of the New Testament we must understand that he did not write everything that has his name attached; but even that being so, there is enough that he did write that provides for us severe problems. You might say where there is smoke there is fire. When one can read the New Testament and hold in limbo the various teachings of Paul one is struck with the lack of unity or harmony between the things he taught or were attributed to him. If one believes Paul held such beliefs then he changed during his life. If one spends any time at all in comparative religious studies one sees that most of the stories applied to Jesus, by the gospel writers and even by Paul himself, find their origin in the exploits and lives of the sun-gods of Gentile nations.**

So we end up today with the Essene's corruption of the Jewish Old Testament (the Greek translation) which is full of prophecies of this coming sun-godman who will die only to be raised and ascend to heaven (Osiris) and who provides salvation for only his followers if they "believe" in him and share his "eucharist." It can be shown why and where the Essenes went for such "religious ideas" but it was not from the Torah, Prophets, and Writings. Later these same Essene oriented apocalyptics will write their rendition of the end of the world and these writings and ideas will make their way into Jewish theology, but all this happens at a much later day and coincides with the Jewish defeatism that accompanied their slaughter at the hands of Antiochus Epipanies.

Opposing this Old Testament lies the Jewish Masoretic text where, in repudiation of this Greek corrupted translation, we find the Jewish Bible with prophecies of a human deliverer anointed of God who will be surrendered to God and used by God to deliver and bring salvation to the world through the words of his mouth and through the teaching of the Torah to the whole world.

## SO...WHICH IS RIGHT WHEN COMING TO TERMS WITH THE JESUS-PAUL PROBLEM? WELL...IT DEPENDS ON WHICH BIBLE YOU USE FOR YOUR AUTHORITY

**The good news is that there is an answer to the above problem but it entails a lot of hard study and reading in order to come to the understanding of the dynamics involved in the changing of the Jewish Masoretic text in the first place. The fact is simply this: The older Jewish Masoretic Texts have been changed in the translation of the Greek translation by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. It is up to us to find our why they did it and what the repercussions of this is, not only for them then, but for the emerging Messianic movement in the first century let alone today. We have those answers:**

**And even if all of these difficulties can be overcome and a probable connection discovered between, for example, a saying of Jesus and a Statement of Paul, this does not necessarily prove that Paul knew or was consciously drawing on the sayings of Jesus.**

**So we are left at present with the still troubling question to be dealt with in the next articles: Was Paul a follower of some historical Jesus in any direct sense, or was his theology rooted rather in the teaching of the early Hellenistic Christian community?**

**This must be explored and we do so in the forth coming articles on this website.**

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# THE PICTURE OF PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...HAVE WE BEEN TAUGHT THE TRUTH?

**I want you to know that I consider the information in this series of articles possibly the most important "religious knowledge" that a Christian can posses. If you have a love in your heart for the Jesus of the Bible then you desperately need to know what is contained in these following articles. Having grown up in church like most, the information which follows was not given to me by my Pastor or my Church. It was not given to me by my Seminary either. Being like most Christians, I read few book dealing with religion before going to Seminary. Why should I? I was assured I had the truth when others did not Sunday after Sunday by my Pastor and my denomination. As if that was not enough the television had multiple channels filled with the same propaganda. I was so content at that point in my life. After an experience with God in my life where I was called into ministry and later attended Seminary, I encountered many things in my religious studies which just did not add up and contradicted what I was led to believe about Paul before my religious studies began. Too many times the professors did not have the answers. I was told to "have faith", that is all I needed. But there was a small problem. Facts should never contradict my faith, rather they should reinforce my faith not destroy it. Through the years of diligent study I found that too often the facts discovered in my study and research too often did just that; what I was learning too often exposed what I had believed "by faith" to be anything but true. Having always been an inquisitive person I set about procuring the answers for these problems in my Christian study. That was almost 18 years ago when I started out my quest for God and His truth. When in Seminary I was on "their track" so to speak and had little time for such investigation until I had graduated. After graduation I devoted time, while Pastoring, to gathering the answers for the problems and questions which remained after graduation. To say the least I was never prepared for what I found. The results of my studies in these areas led me to uncover one of the the greatest deceptions ever in the history of mankind, and it involved the characterization and presentation of the Paul of the New Testament.**

## HAVE YOU FALLEN PREY TO THIS DECEPTION?

**The Jesus/Yeshua of the New Testament is far from the real Yeshua of history. In other words we have a false Yeshua of which we read and hear preached from the pulpits of our churches today. Few know the truth, and cannot even hope to unless they go beyond their New Testaments to find facts and truths about the real Historical Jesus/Yeshua. But part of finding the "truth" about the Jesus/Yeshua of the New Testament involves finding the "truth" about Paul as well because, as you have seen if you read the articles contrasting their "messages," the Paul of the New Testament often contradicts what Jesus teaches (the message of Eternal life for example). I challenge you to listen to what I have to say, but believe nothing. I only hope to arouse**

**you to your own study whereby you can prove to yourself what I say is truth. Take the challenge because what I write angers you, troubles you, intrigues you, or brings doubt to your minds. But by all means take the challenge. If you can separate your emotional response to defend what you have heard preached which you have accepted your whole life by "faith only," then there is hope for your instruction in truth concerning the real Historical Yeshua.**

# WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO FIND IN YOUR PERSONAL STUDY OF PAUL BEHIND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHARACTERIZATION OF HIM

**Don't believe me but please see it for yourself.**

**In a nutshell what I found upon my study over the years, and which these articles will prove, is that Yeshua as well as his immediate disciples, James and Peter were lifelong adherents of Pharisaic Judaism. They never wanted to create a new religion. Paul, however, was not, as he claimed, a native-born Jew of Pharisee upbringing, in fact he was a Sadducee before trying to become a Pharisee. I found to my satisfaction that it was Paul alone who created a new religion through his vision of Yeshua as a divine Savior who died to save humanity. This concept goes far beyond the messianic claims of Yeshua or messianic claims of the Jewish Scriptures, in fact this concept that is so foreign to Moses, the Torah, the Prophets, & the writings as taken from the Jewish Scriptures and not the Greek translation of them, is to be found in the multitude of religious writings for the sun-worshipping Gentile nation (http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com). Unknown to me at the time, and to the vast majority of Christians unfamiliar with the material, is that Paul's religious belief system was an amalgamation of ideas derived from Hellenistic religion, especially from Gnosticism and the mystery cults which had their origin in Egyptian religion. Having had time now to study for myself these pagan religions and mystery cults, the combination of pagan and Biblical ideas is obvious, even to a blind man. As a typical Christian you just have not heard of this yet for yourself. I found that the accepted Christian view that Yeshua was the incarnation of God and that his crucifixion was for the salvation of mankind creative fiction which was recorded by neo-pagans who held such beliefs and recorded them in documents which would later be revered as "Holy Scripture" by the masses under their authority. The Jewish people could not accept such a paganized concept of their Messiah and they still cannot. It is mainly these Gentile followers of this New Testament Jesus, who are basically totally ignorant of Biblical Judaism, who fall for this paganized message of this non-Jewish Messiah of the New Testament Scriptures (http://bennoah1.freewebsites.com). Christians believe that Paul taught the truth about Jesus and what Paul believed was what Yeshua believed as well. This is possibly the greatest mistake a man can make other than failing to believe in and love our Creator. As a Christian we have been taught and assume that Paul taught the truth about Yeshua and that "Paul's gospel" was the same as Yeshua's gospel." Nothing again could be further from the truth. Being indoctrinated as we have as Christians and followers of Jesus because of the Pauline New Testament (his letters were written first and influenced all writings concerning Jesus that would follow) we basically assume that what Paul taught was Yeshua's own teaching and that of his disciples, led by Peter and James, who worked together to establish Christianity as a world religion. Such is far from the truth. The truth is that Paul, a Gentile convert, was finally disowned by the Jerusalem church and the followers of Yeshua because of his religious ideas that he taught to others; both Jews and non-Jews.**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou (Paul) teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)***

**Paul's undermining of Biblical Judaism could no longer be tolerated by the Jerusalem Church in light of**

**Yeshua's Great Commission. The Gentile world was to come to the knowledge of the God of the Jews and their place within the Israel of God; not be taught to break from it and create their own religion that would persecute the mother faith and replace it.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is to blame for this grave injustice and false teaching that has created such a horrible mess, let alone been responsible for the untold deaths of the Jewish people throughout recorded history because of this erroneous teaching?**

**This I understand comes as a shock to most Christians who are unfamiliar with the sources which testify to such happenings. But these facts have for too long been buried in dusty books long unread by the Christian Church and it is time I cry to the rooftops the truth too long buried.**

**In the Synoptic Gospels, Yeshua speaks and acts as a Pharisee, though the Gospel editors have attempted to conceal this by representing him as opposing Pharisaism even when his sayings were most in accordance with Pharisee teaching. If the reader had a working knowledge of Biblical Judaism then when reading the New Testament he could see though this deception which can be found all they way through the New Testament. The reason most Christians read these conflicts with Pharisees and believe them is that they lack fundament knowledge of the Pharisees and their belief system. If one possessed such basic knowledge of Judaism, you could see right through the conflicts for what they are….narratives contrived to pit Yeshua as opposed to the religion of his day and the religion of his day, Biblical Judaism, against him. This was a literary necessity if one was to give license to Yeshua to promote and sanction the creation of a new religion. If one examines the evidence for himself, he will see that Paul, whom the New Testament wishes to portray as having been a trained Pharisee, never was one. The consequences of this for the understanding of early Christianity are immense.**

## WHERE TO LOOK FOR THE TRUTH...THAT WILL SEPARATE FACT FROM FABLES

**Much evidence exists, especially in the writings of Josephus, Epiphanius and Eusebius will will prove my point. We will examine it later in the following articles. Let me state right up front that the statements of Josephus, Epiphanius, and Eusebius must be weighed in relation to their particular interests and bias because they are very evident. But when such bias has been identified and discounted, there remains a residue of valuable information which will prove my points. Exactly the same applies to the New Testament itself. Its information is often distorted by the bias of the author or editor, but a knowledge of the nature of this bias makes possible the emergence of the true shape of events.**

**In considering the background of Paul, we will look at sources which most Christians have never heard of before. We must look to one of the earliest accounts of Paul in existence, that given by the Ebionites, as reported by Epiphanius. Epiphanius is a Church historian and his writing are very telling. Epiphanius' account of the Ebionites has been neglected by too many for too long. In fact I discovered it quite accidentally when reading about the Ebionites. Robert Graves and Joshua Podro in The Nazarene Gospel Restored did take Epiphanius' Ebionite account seriously; but, though they made some cogent remarks about it, their treatment of the matter was brief. I hope that these articles will do more to alter the prevailing dismissive attitude towards the evidence of this fascinating and important ancient community.**

**So as we conclude this short introduction let us understand beyond any doubt according to Acts 21:21 that the James and the Jerusalem church had a problem with Paul. It is to this issue we must now turn to discover the hidden Problem of Paul in the writings of the New Testament.**

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# THE PROBLEM OF PAUL…BUT YOU NEVER KNEW THERE WAS A PROBLEM…DID YOU?

**At the beginning of Christianity stand two figures: Yeshua and Paul. Yeshua is erroneously assumed and regarded by most Christians as the founder of their religion, in that the events of his life comprise the foundation story of Christianity; but Paul is regarded as the great interpreter of Yeshua's' mission, who explained, in a way that Yeshua himself never did, how Yeshua's life and death fitted into a cosmic scheme of salvation, stretching from the creation of Adam to the end of time. In reality this assumption is wrong on both accounts:**

- **Paul, rather than Jesus, is the founder of Gentile Christianity which is not a continuation of Jewish Christianity but rather it's replacement.**
- **And Paul, instead of being the "interpreter" of Yeshua's mission is the main culprit in changing the mission and message of Jesus for the Gentile world.**

**Answer for yourself: What is the truth regarding the relationship between Yeshua and Paul?**

**In the search for truth regarding this issue we have two options. We can approach the above question based upon "faith alone"or "facts that prove our faith". Since I believe without a doubt that faith and fact are not mutually exclusive of each other I will approach the above question not from the standpoint of "faith alone" but from "a factual analysis of the evidence that can be discerned from intensive study." We will reveal to the reader what he has not see as we examine historians who regard the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament as an important source of evidence requiring careful sifting and criticism, since their authors were propagating religious beliefs rather than conveying dispassionate historical information. In so doing it is of paramount importance that we take into account all relevant evidence and factual data from other sources, such as Josephus, the Talmud, the Church historians and the Gnostic writings.**

**Answer for yourself: What would Yeshua himself have thought of Paul? Before you answer you better wait until you learn the truth which has been withheld from you. Read on please.**

**We must remember that Yeshua never knew Paul; the two men never once met. The disciples who knew Yeshua best, such as Peter, James and John, have left no writings behind them explaining how Yeshua seemed to them or what they considered his mission to have been. If you have not learned yet be advised that the Gospels that bear the names of the apostles and many of the letters of Paul were written anonymously and later the names of important people connected with Yeshua were added to give them "authority" among the people. This was a long standing characteristic of the Jewish people as well as the Greeks themselves (http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua).**

**Answer for yourself: Did the closest followers of Yeshua in the Jerusalem Church agree with the interpretations disseminated by Paul in his fluent, articulate writings?**

**Answer for yourself: Or did they perhaps think that this newcomer to the scene, spinning complicated theories about the place of Yeshua in the scheme of things, was getting everything wrong?**

**Impossible you say? Please read on. Paul claimed that his interpretations were not just his own invention, but had come to him by personal inspiration; he claimed that he had personal acquaintance with the resurrected Yeshua, even though he had never met him during his lifetime. Such a visionary acquaintance with Jesus, Paul claimed, gained through visions and transports, was actually superior to the Apostle's acquaintance with Yeshua during his lifetime, when Yeshua was much more reticent about his purposes.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it? Let's see.**

# LET'S READ THE BOOK OF ACTS CAREFULLY...THE PAUL & THE JERUSALEM CHURCH IN CONFLICT

**We know about Paul not only from his own letters but also from the book of Acts, which gives a full account of his life. Paul, in fact, is the hero of Acts, which was written by an admirer and follower of his, namely, Luke, who was also the author of the Gospel of that name. This point cannot be underemphasized because we will see shortly not only the slanting of truth by the author of Acts in the effort to promote Paul, but outright lies told in Paul's defense.**

**Now I must address something that I was taught in Seminary that was one of the major problems that I never could get away from. This is just one of many problems. You should know that this Paul-Jerusalem Church conflict was mentioned for only about 3 minutes in class one day. That was it. Three minutes for something that has a major role to play in the search for truth. The traditional spin of the story, as taken from Acts, as well as Galatians, it would appear that there was some friction between Paul and the leaders of the 'Jerusalem Church', the surviving companions of Yeshua; but this friction was supposedly resolved, and they all became the best of friends, with common aims and purposes. This slanted view of the Paul-Jerusalem Church conflict is far from historically accurate. From certain of Paul's letters, particularly Galatians, as well as extra-Biblical materials that exist today, it seems that the friction was more serious than in the picture given in Acts, which thus appears to be partly a propaganda exercise, intended to portray unity in the early Church. There was no unity among the Jerusalem Church and Paul because of Paul's "unique Gospel" he taught to non-Jews and Jews as well.**

**Answer for yourself: Understanding the nature and the seriousness of the Paul-Jerusalem Church conflict, the question recurs: what would Yeshua have thought of Paul, and what did the Apostles think of him?**

# TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE…PAUL'S WRITINGS INFLUENCED THE GOSPELS WHICH WERE WRITTEN LATER

**We should remember that the New Testament, as we have it, is much more dominated by Paul than appears at first sight. As we read it, we come across the Four Gospels, of which Yeshua is the hero, and do not encounter Paul as a character until we embark on the post-Yeshua narrative of Acts. Then we finally come into contact with Paul himself, in his letters. But this impression is misleading, for the earliest writings in the New Testament are actually Paul's letters, which were written about AD 50-60, while the Gospels were not written, according to Christian sources, until the period AD 70-110. Unbiased non-Christian sources can show us that basically these "gospels" were oral traditions and did not become concrete until much later and even then they remained in a state of flux and change. The first Gospel quote from one of the big FOUR Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) cannot be found in ANY early Christian literature until 200 A.D. This argument from silence shows us that these four Gospels did not get the names of the Apostles attached to them until rather late. Back to our point. Unbiased scholars today will show us, by external and internal evidence,**

that the Gospels are not the work of Jewish authors but non-Jews. Coupled with this the understanding that the Pauline corpus of literature was written first then this means that the theories of Paul were already before the writers of the Gospels and colored their interpretations of Yeshua's activities. **Paul is, in a sense, present from the very first word of the New Testament. This is, of course, not the whole story, for the Gospels are based on traditions and even written sources which go back to a time before the impact of Paul, and these early traditions and sources are not entirely obliterated of truth in the final version and give valuable indications of what the story was like before Paulinist editors pulled it into final shape.** However, the dominant outlook and shaping perspective of the Gospels is that of Paul, for the simple reason that it was the Paulinist view of what Yeshua's sojourn on Earth had been about that was triumphant in the Church as it developed in history. **Rival interpretations, which at one time had been orthodox and accepted by the original followers of Jesus, opposed to Paul's very individual views, now became heretical and were crowded out of the final version of the writings adopted by the Pauline Church as the inspired canon of the New Testament.**

**This explains the puzzling and ambiguous role given in the Gospels to the companions of Yeshua, the twelve disciples. They are shadowy figures, who are allowed little personality, except of a schematic kind. They are also portrayed as stupid; they never quite understand what Yeshua is up to. Their importance in the origins of Christianity is played down in a remarkable way. For example, we find immediately after Yeshua's death that the leader of the Jerusalem Church is Yeshua's brother James. Yet in the Gospels, this James does not appear at all as having anything to do with Yeshua's mission and story. Instead, he is given a brief mention as one of the brothers of Yeshua who allegedly opposed Yeshua during his lifetime and regarded him as mad. How it came about that a brother who had been hostile to Yeshua in his lifetime suddenly became the revered leader of the Church immediately after Yeshua's death is not explained, though one would have thought that some explanation was called for. Later Church legends, of course, filled the gap with stories of the miraculous conversion of James after the death of Yeshua and his development into a saint.** But the most likely explanation is, as my research attests, that the erasure of Yeshua's brother James (and his other brothers) from any significant role in the Gospel story is part of the denigration of the early leaders who had been in close contact with Yeshua and regarded with great suspicion and dismay the neo-pagan Christological theories of the upstart Paul, flaunting his brand new visions in interpretation of the Yeshua whom he had never met in the flesh.

**We must concern ourselves with just "who" this Paul really is. We have the presentation of Paul in the New Testament but few have ever read or studied close and deep enought to see the inconsistencies and just outright untruths that are recorded concerning him.**

**Answer for yourself: Just who is this Paul of the New Testament?**

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# CAN KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHARISEES, GAMALIEL, STEPHEN, & PAULS' PRE-CHRISTIAN LIFE HELP US FIND THE TRUTH CONCERNING PAUL?

**Answerfor yourself: Who, then, was Paul?**

**Here we would seem to have a good deal of information; but on closer examination, it will turn out to be full of problems. We have the information given by Paul about himself in his letters, which are far from impersonal and often take an autobiographical turn. Also we have the information given in Acts, in which Paul plays the chief role. But the information given by any person about himself always has to be treated with a certain reserve, since everyone has strong motives for putting himself in the best possible light. And the information given about Paul in Acts also requires close scrutiny, since this work was written by someone committed to the Pauline cause and can be shown to be slanted in defense of Paul at the expense of historical fact.**

**Answer for yourself: Have we any other sources for Paul's biography?**

**As a matter of fact, we have, though they are scattered in various unexpected places. Most Christians and Pastors have never been advised to their existence. To uncover the truth about Paul it is necessary that we explore them all. We gather valuable information in our quest for truth about Paul from:**

- **An extract from the otherwise lost writings of the Ebionites, a sect of great importance for our quest**
- **A disguised attack on Paul included in a text of orthodox Christian authority**
- **An Arabic manuscript, in which a text of the early Jewish Christians, the opponents of Paul, has been preserved by an unlikely chain of circumstances.**

## FINDING TRUTH ABOUT PAUL...LOOKING AT ACTS THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE...THE PHARISEES AND GAMALIEL

**Let us first survey the evidence found in the more obvious and well-known sources before we get into the 3 areas listed above. It appears from Acts that Paul was at first called 'Saul', and that his birthplace was Tarsus, a city in Asia Minor (Acts 9:11, and 21:39, and 22:3). This will be of major importance as we will see later. Strangely enough, however, Paul himself, in his letters, never mentions that he came from Tarsus.**

**Answer for yourself: Is there a reason for Paul's omission of Tarsus as his hometown? Yes, and the answer will be very enlightening as we continue our search for truth. We will soon see that Tarsus is the center for gentile mystery religious cult of Mithra and Pauline Christianity has much in common with the religious concepts contained in Mithraism.**

**Even when Paul is at his most autobiographical he fails to mention Tarsus as his hometown.**

**Instead, he gives the following information about his origins: 'I am an Israelite myself, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin' (Romans 11:2); and '... circumcised on my eighth day, Israelite by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born and bred; in my attitude to the law, a Pharisee....' (Philippians 3:5). It seems that Paul was not anxious to impart to the recipients of his letters that he came from somewhere so remote as Tarsus from Jerusalem, the powerhouse of Pharisaism. The impression he wished to give, of coming from an unimpeachable Pharisaic background, would have been much impaired by the admission that he in fact came from Tarsus, where there were few, if any, Pharisee teachers and a Pharisee training would have been hard to come by. As if that was not enough, Tarsus, in Asia Minor, was the center for the Mystery Cult Mithra. It is these ideas in Mithraism, so common to Paul since growing up in this city, which he mingled with Judaism in his amalgamation of Hellenistic religion and Biblical Judaism. If you are unaware of the tenets of Mithraism then you read the New Testament and Paul's epistles completely unaware of what I speak. But if you have studied Mitrhaism then the parallels are overwhelming. I suggest you begin such a study to see of which I speak. (http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com).**

**Answer for yourself: Would a Pharisee express ideas about God's messenger of the covenant and who was to turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers, in concepts which have more in common with the pagan god Mithra than with Biblical Judaism? This question should stop you on a dime. The answer is obvious.**

**Answer for yourself: We encounter, then, right at the start of our enquiry into Paul's background, the question: was Paul really from a genuine Pharisaic family, as he says to his correspondents?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that the embellishment of Paul's pedigree was just something that he said to increase his status in the eyes of his Gentile readers in Asia Minor since the Pharisees were held in high repute throughout the Roman and Parthian empires?**

**The fact that this question is hardly ever asked shows how strong the influence of traditional religious attitudes still is in Pauline studies. Scholars feel that, however objective their enquiry is supposed to be, they must always preserve an attitude of deep reverence towards Paul, and never say anything to suggest that he may have bent the truth at times, though the evidence is strong enough in various parts of his life-story that Paul was not above deception when he felt it warranted by circumstances. Any any kind of challenging expose on Paul always brings criticisms from many of my readers, but dear ones you have only seen a few pieces so far of a 1000 piece puzzle. My promise to you is that if you hang in there then you will come to see the whole thing soon and see the truth concerning the Paul of the New Testament for the first time in your life.**

**It should be noted that modern scholarship has shown that, at this time, the Pharisees were held in high repute throughout the Roman and Parthian empires as a dedicated group who upheld religious ideals in the face of tyranny, supported leniency and mercy in the application of laws, and championed the rights of the poor against the oppression of the rich. The undeserved reputation for hypocrisy which is attached to the name 'Pharisee' in medieval and modern times is due to the campaign against the Pharisees in the Gospels -- a campaign dictated by politico-religious considerations at the time when the Gospels were given their final editing, about forty to eighty years after the death of Yeshua. Paul's desire to be thought of as a person of Pharisee upbringing should thus be understood in the light of the actual reputation of the Pharisees in Paul's lifetime; Paul was claiming a high honor, which would much enhance his status in the eyes of his correspondents.**

**Before looking further into Paul's claim to have come from a Pharisee background, we must continue our survey of what we are told about Paul's career in the more accessible sources. The young Saul, we are told, left Tarsus and came to the Land of Israel, where he studied in the Pharisee academy of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). We know from other sources about Gamaliel, who is a highly respected figure in the rabbinical writings such as the Mishnah, and was given the title 'Rabban', as the leading sage of his day. That he was the leader of the whole Pharisee party is attested also by the New Testament itself, for he plays a prominent role in one scene in the book of Acts (chapter 5) -- a role that, as we shall see later, is hard to reconcile with the general picture of the Pharisees given in the Gospels.**

Yet Paul himself, in his letters, never mentions that he was a pupil of Gamaliel, even when he is most concerned to stress his qualifications as a Pharisee. It is only through the writing of Luke we learn of this great accomplishment. You should find it rather strange that in all of Paul's self-defenses that he makes to his critics in the New Testament that he never makes mention of that. We have to wait for others to write about him before we learn of this "Gamaliel" tradition.

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find this omission of Paul's status as Gamaliel's student, from the hand of Paul in his autobiography, rather puzzling in light of the fact of his boast of his Pharisaism let alone him many defenses he makes to his critics who themselves were Pharisees quite often (THINK)? It would seem to me that if this were true then Paul would be eager to share such details.**

**Answer for yourself: Here again, then, the question has to be put: was Paul ever really a pupil of Gamaliel or was this claim made by Luke as an embellishment to his narrative?**

***As we shall see later, there are certain considerations which make it most unlikely, quite apart from Paul's significant omission to say anything about the matter, that Paul was ever a pupil of Gamaliel's.***

## FINDING TRUTH ABOUT PAUL...LOOKING AT ACTS THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE...STEPHEN'S DEATH

**We are also told of the young Saul that he was implicated, to some extent, in the death of the martyr Stephen. The people who gave false evidence against Stephen, we are told, and who also took the leading part in the stoning of their innocent victim, 'laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul'. The death of Stephen is described, and it is added, 'And Saul was among those who approved of his murder' (Acts 8:1).**

**Answer for yourself: How much truth is there in this detail?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it to be regarded as historical fact or as dramatic embellishment, emphasizing the contrast between Paul before and after conversion?**

The death of Stephen is itself an episode that requires searching analysis, since it is full of problems and contradictions. **Until we have a better idea of why and by whom Stephen was killed and what were the views for which he died, we can only note the alleged implication of Saul in the matter as a subject for further investigation. For the moment, we also note that the alleged implication of Saul heightens the impression that adherence to Pharisaism would mean violent hostility to the followers of Yeshua.**

The next thing we are told about Saul/Paul in Acts is that he was 'harrying the Church; he entered house after house, seizing men and women, and sending them to prison' (Acts 8:3). We are not told at this point by what authority or on whose orders Paul was carrying out this persecution. It was clearly not a matter of merely individual action on his part, for sending people to prison can only be done by some kind of official. Saul must have been acting on behalf of some authority, and who this authority was can be gleaned from later incidents in which Saul was acting on behalf of the High Priest. Anyone with knowledge of the religious and political scene at this time in Judaea feels the presence of an important problem here:

***the High Priest was not a Pharisee, but a Sadducee, and the Sadducees were bitterly opposed to the Pharisees.***

**Answer for yourself: How is it that Saul, allegedly an enthusiastic Pharisee ('a Pharisee of the Pharisees'), is**

**acting hand in glove with the High Priest?**

**As you are now beginning to see for yourself the picture we are given in our New Testament sources of Saul, in the days before his conversion to Yeshua, is contradictory and suspect.**

***Acts 9:1 1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, (KJV)***

**The next we hear of Saul (Acts, chapter 9) is that he 'was still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest (the chief enemy of the Pharisees and Paul is supposed to be "a Pharisee of all Pharisees") and applied for letters to the synagogues at Damascus authorizing him to arrest anyone he found, men or women, who followed the new way, and bring them to Jerusalem.' This incident is full of mystery.**

**Answer for yourself: If Saul had his hands so full in 'harrying the church' in Judaea, why did he suddenly have the idea of going off to Damascus to harry the Church there?**

**Answer for yourself: What was the special urgency of a visit to Damascus?**

**Answer for yourself: Further, what kind of jurisdiction did the Jewish High Priest have over the non-Jewish city of Damascus that would enable him to authorize arrests and extraditions in that city? Could this "Damascus" refer to the Essenes at Qumran?**

**There is, moreover, something very puzzling about the way in which Saul's relation to the High Priest is described: as if he is a private citizen who wishes to make citizen's arrests according to some plan of his own, and approaches the High Priest for the requisite authority. Surely there must have been some much more definite official connection between the High Priest and Saul, not merely that the High Priest was called upon to underwrite Saul's project. It seems more likely that the plan was the High Priest's and not Saul's, and that Saul was acting as agent or emissary of the High Priest. The whole incident needs to be considered in the light of probabilities and current conditions.**

# FINDING TRUTH ABOUT PAUL...LOOKING AT ACTS THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE...THE PRE-CHRISTIAN PERIOD IN PAUL'S LIFE

**The book of Acts then continues with the account of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus through a vision of Yeshua and the succeeding events of his life as a follower of Yeshua. The pre-Christian period of Saul's life, however, does receive further mention later in the book of Acts, both in chapter 22 and chapter 26, where some interesting details are added, and also some further puzzles.**

**In chapter 22, Saul (now called Paul), is shown giving his own account of his early life in a speech to the people after the Roman commandant had questioned him. Paul speaks as follows:**

***I am a true-born Jew, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia. I was brought up in this city, and as a pupil of Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in every point of our ancestral law. I have always been ardent in God's service, as you all are today. And so I began to persecute this movement to the death, arresting its followers, men and women alike, and putting them in chains. For this I have as witnesses the High Priest and the whole Council of Elders. I was given letters from them to our fellow-Jews at Damascus, and had started out to bring the Christians there to Jerusalem as prisoners for punishment; and this is what happened....***

**Paul then goes on to describe his vision of Yeshua on the road to Damascus. Previously he had described himself to the commandant as 'a Jew, a Tarsian from Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city'.**

**It is from this passage that we learn of Paul's native city, Tarsus, and of his alleged studies under Gamaliel. Note that he says that, though born in Tarsus, he was 'brought up in this city' (i.e. Jerusalem) which suggests that he spent his childhood in Jerusalem.**

**Answer for yourself: Does this mean that his parents moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem?**

**Answer for yourself: Or that the child was sent to Jerusalem on his own, which seems unlikely?**

**If Paul spent only a few childhood years in Tarsus, he would hardly describe himself proudly as 'a citizen of no mean city' (Tarsus). Jews who had spent most of their lives in Jerusalem would be much more prone to describe themselves as citizens of Jerusalem. The likelihood is that Paul moved to Jerusalem when he was already a grown man, and he left his parents behind in Tarsus, which seems all the more probable in that they receive no mention in any account of Paul's experiences in Jerusalem.**

**As for Paul's alleged period of studies under Gamaliel, this would have had to be in adulthood, for Gamaliel was a teacher of advanced studies, not a teacher of children. He would accept as a pupil only someone well grounded and regarded as suitable for the rabbinate.**

**Answer for yourself: The question, then, since Paul most likely came to Jerusalem as an adult, is simple. Where and how Paul received this thorough grounding, if at all. As pointed out above and argued fully below, there are strong reasons to think that Paul never was a pupil of Gamaliel and the whole account is an embellishment of Paul to give him greater authority to him and his message to the Gentile world.**

**An important question that also arises in this chapter of Acts is that of Paul's Roman citizenship. This is mentioned first in Acts chapter 16. Paul claims to have been born a Roman citizen, which would mean that his father was a Roman citizen. There are many problems to be discussed in this connection, and some of these questions impinge on Paul's claim to have had a Pharisaic background.**

**A further account of Paul's pre-Christian life is found in chapter 26 of Acts, in a speech addressed by Paul to King Agrippa. Paul says:**

***My life from my youth up, the life I led from the beginning among my people and in Jerusalem, is familiar to all Jews. Indeed they have known me long enough and could testify, if they only would, that I belonged to the strictest group in our religion: I lived as a Pharisee. And it is for a hope kindled by God's promise to our forefathers that I stand in the dock today. Our twelve tribes hope to see the fulfillment of that promise.... I myself once thought it my duty to work actively against the name of Yeshua of Nazareth; and I did so in Jerusalem. It was I who imprisoned many of God's people by authority obtained from the chief priests; and when they were condemned to death, my vote was cast against them. In all the synagogues I tried by repeated punishment to make them renounce their faith; indeed my fury rose to such a pitch that I extended my persecution to foreign cities. On one such occasion I was travelling to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests....***

**Again the account continues with the vision on the road to Damascus.**

**Again Luke related to the reader this information. This speech, of course, cannot be regarded as the authentic words addressed by Paul to King Agrippa, but rather as a rhetorical speech composed by Luke, the author of Acts, in the style of ancient historians.**

**Thus the claim made in the speech that Paul's career as a Pharisee of high standing was known to 'all Jews' cannot be taken at face value.**

**Answer for yourself: How can Paul's status of being a Pharisee be known to "all Jews" when it was already demonstrated that Paul was working for the High Priest as part of his "temple police" who were the only ones in Israel with the power to "arrest" others? Let us not forget that those with such power were Sadducees.**

It is interesting that Paul is represented as saying that he 'cast his vote' against the followers of Yeshua, thus helping to condemn them to death. This can only refer to the voting of the Sanhedrin or Council of Elders, which was convened to try capital cases; so what Luke is claiming here for his hero Paul is that he was at one time a member of the Sanhedrin.

**Answer for yourself: Why did not Paul, when defending himself and his apostleship, never write in his own hand that he was a member of the Sanhedrin when promoting himself to his critics in his other epistles?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it strange that Paul never mentioned this but only someone else who wrote about him?**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you think that such a distinction would be strong ammunition to be used in Paul's defense of his apostleship to others Jews?**

Paul's omission of his Sanhedrin experience is highly unlikely in his personal defence of his status as an Apostle, for Paul would surely have made this claim in his letters, when writing about his credentials as a Pharisee, if it had been true.

**Answer for yourself: If Paul was a Pharisee as he claims then why would he be persecuting the same people that believed in Jesus as the Messiah in their day, especially in light of the fact that Gamaliel had said about Peter and John "leave them alone"?**

**There is, however, as you can see, irreconcilable confusion both in this account and in the accounts quoted above about whether the Sanhedrin, as well as the High Priest or 'chief priests', was involved in the persecution of the followers of Yeshua. Sometimes the High Priest alone is mentioned, sometimes the Sanhedrin is coupled with him, as if the two are inseparable. But we see on two occasions cited in Acts that the High Priest was outvoted by the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin; on both occasions,** the Pharisees were opposing an attempt to persecute the followers of Yeshua; so the representation of High Priest and Sanhedrin as having identical aims is one of the suspect features of these accounts.

If one holds to the traditional account concerning Paul in the book of Acts many things just don't add up, in fact they contradict and expose the truth of the matter if one has a little knowledge of Judaism in that part of history. **Let me explain. It will be seen from the above collation of passages concerning the traditional story of Paul in the book of Acts concerning Paul's background and early life, together with Paul's own references to his background in his letters, that the same strong picture emerges: that Paul was at first a highly trained Pharisee rabbi, learned in all the intricacies of the rabbinical commentaries on scripture and legal traditions (afterwards collected in the rabbinical compilations, the Talmud and Midrash). As a Pharisee we are taught to believe that Paul was strongly opposed to the new sect which followed Yeshua and which believed that he had been resurrected after his crucifixion. So opposed was Paul to this sect that he took violent action against it, dragging its adherents to prison.** Though this strong picture has emerged, many doubts have also arisen and things just don't add up.

**Answer for yourself: How is it, for example, that Paul claims to have voted against Christians on trial for their lives before the Sanhedrin, when in fact, in the graphically described trial of Peter before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5), the Pharisees, led by Gamaliel, voted for the *release* of Peter (THINK)?**

**Answer for yourself: What kind of Pharisee was Paul, if he took an attitude towards the early Messianic Jewish believers (Christians) which, on the evidence of the same book of Acts, was untypical of the Pharisees who desired the coming of the Messiah to crush the enemies of Israel?**

**Answer for yourself: How is it that this book of Acts is so inconsistent within itself that it describes Paul as violently opposed to Christianity *because* of his deep attachment to Pharisaism, and yet also describes the Pharisees as being friendly towards the early Christians, standing up for them and saving their lives?**

**It has been pointed out by many scholars that the book of Acts, on the whole, contains a surprising amount of evidence favorable to the Pharisees, showing them to have been tolerant and merciful. Some scholars have even argued that the book of Acts is a pro-Pharisee work; but this can hardly be maintained. For, outweighing all the evidence favorable to the Pharisees is the material relating to Paul, which is, in all its aspects, unfavorable to the Pharisees; not only is Paul himself portrayed as being a virulent persecutor *when he was a Pharisee*, but Paul declares that he himself was punished by flogging five times (2 Corinthians 11:24) by the 'Jews' (usually taken to mean the Pharisees).**

**Answer for yourself: Why was Paul, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, flogged for teaching about the Messiah by fellow Pharisees, when he was only preaching of the Messiah of Israel as the hope of Israel, unless what he was teaching about him and his "unique Gospel" contradicted the Law, Moses, etc.?**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (THINK)***

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul's Gospel the Gospel of Jesus and the Jerusalem Church? Evidently not since non-Messianic Jews did not bother themselves with Jesus or with Gentiles. Those following Paul were from James who were instructed to keep watch over Paul and what he was teaching (THINK).**

**So no one really comes away from reading Acts with any good impression of the Pharisees, but rather with the negative impressions derived from the Gospels reinforced. This is not the truth concerning the Pharisees.**

**Answer for yourself: Why, therefore, is Paul always so concerned to stress that he came from a Pharisee background? Since the Sadducees were despised by the people did Paul see that his personal agendas and advancement depended on switching "parties?" (More on this later).**

**A great many motives can be discerned, but there is one that needs to be singled out here: the desire to stress the alleged continuity between Judaism and Pauline Christianity. Paul wishes to say that whereas, when he was a Pharisee, he mistakenly regarded the early Christians as heretics who had departed from true Judaism, after his conversion he took the opposite view, that Christianity was the true Judaism. All his training as a Pharisee, he wishes to say -- all his study of scripture and tradition -- really leads to the acceptance of Yeshua as the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament. So when Paul declares his Pharisee past, he is not merely proclaiming his own sins -- 'See how I have changed, from being a Pharisee persecutor to being a devoted follower of Yeshua!' -- he is also proclaiming his credentials -- 'If someone as learned as I can believe that Yeshua was the fulfillment of the Torah, who is there fearless enough to disagree?'**

**This sounds great but as you have seen his Sadducee roots are not even mentioned in the above scenario nor are they by any writer of Paul in the New Testament. This piece of information has to be discerned for "detective" work.**

**On the face of it, Paul's doctrine of Yeshua is a daring departure from Judaism. Paul was advocating a doctrine that seemed to have far more in common with pagan myths than with Judaism: that Yeshua was a divine-human person who had descended to Earth from the heavens (Gnosticism) and experienced death for the express purpose of saving mankind. The very fact that the Jews found this doctrine new and shocking shows that it plays no role in the Jewish scripture, at least not in any way easily discernible. Yet Paul was not content to say that his doctrine was new; on the contrary, he wished to say that every line of the Jewish scripture was a foreshadowing of the Yeshua-event as he understood it, and that those who understood the scripture in any other way were failing in comprehension of what Judaism had always been about. So his insistence on his Pharisaic upbringing was part of his insistence on continuity.**

**There were those who accepted Paul's doctrine, but *did* regard it as a radical new departure, with nothing in the Jewish scriptures foreshadowing it. The best known figure of this kind was Marcion (also a Gnostic), who lived about a hundred years after Paul, and regarded Paul as his chief inspiration. Yet Marcion refused to see anything Jewish in Paul's doctrine, but regarded it as a new revelation. He regarded the Jewish scriptures as the work of the Devil and he excluded the Old Testament from his version of the Bible.**

**Paul himself rejected this eccentric view of Marcion concerning the Jewish Scriptures but agreed with him in many other points of religious doctrine (we will get to that later). Though Paul regarded much of the Old Testament as obsolete, superseded by the advent of Yeshua, he still regarded it as the Word of God, prophesying the new Christian Church and giving it authority. So Paul's posturing himself as a Pharisee was necessary for his ministry to have any possible chance of success as he was to build a reputation for himself since being rejected ultimately by the High Priest when not allowed to marry his daughter and later by the Pharisees after his supposed "conversion" since not long before he was imprisoning them and killing them. Paul is a man without acceptance in Israel. Paul's supposed conversion to Phariseeism was necessary in order to symbolizes the continuity between the old dispensation and the new: a figure who comprised in his own person the turning-point at which Judaism was transformed into Christianity.**

**Throughout the Christian centuries, there have been many Christian writers and scholars who have seen Paul's claim to a Pharisee background in this light. In the medieval Disputations convened by Christians to convert Jews, arguments were put forward purporting to show that not only the Jewish scriptures but even the rabbinical writings, the Talmud and the Midrash, supported the claims of Christianity that Yeshua was the Messiah, that he was divine and that he had to suffer death for mankind. Though Paul was not often mentioned in these Disputations, the project was one of which he would have approved. In modern times, scholars have labored to argue that Paul's doctrines about the Messiah and divine suffering are continuous with Judaism as it appears in the Bible, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and in the rabbinical writings (the best-known effort of this nature is Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, by W.D. Davies). I think if one can approach the evidence and not have an agenda to prove Christianity correct at any cost then the conclusions reached by W.D. Davies and others can be proven wrong in light of the evidence. Separating emotion from truth is hard if not impossible for some.**

**So Paul's claim to be an expert in Pharisee learning is relevant to a very important and central issue -- whether Christianity, in the form given to it by Paul, is really continuous with Judaism or whether it is a new doctrine, having no roots in Judaism, but deriving, in so far as it has an historical background, from pagan myths of dying and resurrected gods and Gnostic myths of heaven-descended redeemers.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul truly stand in the Jewish tradition, or was he a person of basically Hellenistic religious type, but seeking to give a coloring of Judaism to a salvation cult that was really opposed to everything that Judaism stood for?**

**Let us continue our study in the second article in this series as we examine who the Pharisees really were and their standing in 2nd Temple Judaism. Shalom.**

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# THE PURPOSEFUL MISREPRESANTATION OF THE PHARISEES IN THE NT IN ORDER TO CLOUD THE PAULINE PROBLEM

**Answer for yourself: Once one sees the facts of the matter for themselves, how can we hold onto the New Testament story that Paul had persecuted the followers of Yeshua because he was a good Pharisee?**

**Such is ridiculous. Even in Acts there is a tension between the Pharisees who, like Gamaliel, seem fairly well-disposed toward the apostles, and the High Priest who, along with his obedient minion Paul, is out to stop any Messianic uprising at any cost. The High Priest was in charge of keeping the peace among his people and any Messianic riot or uprising would get Rome's quick attention and sure harsh response. The Messianics had to be discouraged in order to prevent such an apocalyptic uprising; thus the mission of Paul and others. If Paul is a Pharisee, he is on the wrong side in this scenario! If it is believed that Paul had letters of arrest for home messianic groups of believers, then Paul, without a doubt, is a member of the Temple police, an operative of the High Priest, no Pharisee at all.**

## LEARNING THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PHARISEES...BIBLICAL AND NON-BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS

**These are serious charges and if made must be backed up with facts and knowledge. It is my desire in this article to expose the literary creationism of the redactors and authors of the New Testament which write of Paul and make him to be something he in reality was not. After all the evidence is put forth then you, the reader, should be able to make an intelligent decision instead of having to rely completely upon the New Testament account of Paul which is flawed to say the least.**

**If we are to answer the question of whether or not Paul was a Pharisee, or even to understand the significance of his claim to have been one, it is necessary to have a fuller account of who the Pharisees were and what they stood for. Here we must not rely on the Gospel picture of the Pharisees, which is not only strongly hostile, but a perverse presentation of historical fact. Without unbiased personal study in this area you are not able to see the deception for yourself.**

- **The Gospels portray the Pharisees as the chief opponents of Yeshua, criticizing him for curing people on the sabbath, and even plotting to kill him because of these cures.**
- **The same Gospels also represent Yeshua as criticizing the Pharisees most strongly, calling them hypocrites and oppressors.**

**Because of this Gospel picture, the word 'Pharisee' has come to be synonymous with 'hypocrite' in the Western mind, and the defects attributed to the Pharisees - self-righteousness, meanness, authoritarian severity and exclusiveness have contributed to the anti-Semitic stereotype and have been assigned to Jews generally. This is**

**not fair to the Pharisees and their great responsibility for the preservation of the faith once given to the saints.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the Gospel's representations of the Pharisees accurate? Unless you have consulted materials outside the Gospels you really cannot answer that question to either confirm or deny the Gospel's characterizations of the Pharisees. Let us not forget that scholars today reveal to us the hand of Gentile writers in the Gospels and this says volumes!**

# THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS OF THE PHARISEES….FACT OR PROPAGANDA?

**In recent years, many Christian scholars like E.P. Sanders, James Parkes, R.T. Hereford, George F. Moore, and many others have come to realize that this Gospel picture of the Pharisees is propaganda, not fact.**

**Our main source of authentic information about the Pharisees is their own voluminous literature, including prayers, hymns, books of wisdom, law books, sermons, commentaries on the Bible, mystical treatises, books of history and many other genres. Far from being arid ritualists, they were one of the most creative groups in history.**

**Moreover, the Pharisees, far from being rigid and inflexible in applying religious laws, were noted (as the first-century historian Josephus points outs, and as is amply confirmed in the Pharisee law books) for the leniency of their legal rulings, and for the humanity and flexibility with which they sought to adapt the law of the Bible to changing conditions and improved moral conceptions. Let me say that this leniency of the Pharisees will come to haunt us when we try to explain the rigid persecution of the Nazarene Messianics by Paul who himself is supposed to be a Pharisee!**

**Answer for yourself: How do you explain this leniency tendency of the Pharisees who have prayed for hundreds of years for the coming of the Messiah being persecuted, arrested, and killed by other lenient Messianic Pharisees like Paul who were likewise hoping and praying for the coming of their Messiah? Something is amiss about Paul but more on that in a second!**

**These Pharisees maintained such lenient positions because they they regarded the Bible as the inspired word of God and adaptable to various situations; they did not take a rigid literalist view of the interpretation of the Bible.**

**The pharisees knew that the word for religious teaching was Torah, and they believed that as well as the Written Torah, there was also an Oral Torah, which took the Written Torah as its base and expanded it by way of definition, commentary, questioning and exegesis, so that it became a living reality. Some of the Oral Law, they believed, was just as old as the Written Law, having been given to Moses by God; but this ancient origin was claimed only for certain basic elements of the Oral Law. Most of it had arisen in the course of time in response to new historical conditions; for example, it was not claimed that the prayers of the liturgy, such as the Eighteen Benedictions, were composed by Moses or by any of the prophets of the Hebrew Bible; it was acknowledged that these prayers were composed by leading Pharisees, who from time to time added or subtracted from these prayers, or even to the calendar of feasts or fasts, as seemed appropriate.**

**Since the Pharisees acknowledged a human element in religious teaching- an element for which no divine inspiration could be claimed -they acknowledged also the right to disagreement or difference of opinion. Thus the Pharisees' writings are remarkable for the variety of differing opinions that they record: the Mishnah and the Talmud are largely records of these disagreements on every legal topic under the sun.**

**The Pharisees argued amongst themselves not only about matters of religious law but also about matters of theology. However, it was in matters of law that they felt that some decision had to be reached and, since they had no method for deciding such matters other than by discussion and debate, the decisions were made by a majority vote. Once a majority decision had been reached, the dissenting rabbis were required to toe the line and accept the result of the vote, not because they were regarded as refuted, but because of the principle of the rule of law, which was conceived in exactly the same terms as in parliamentary democracies today, where the opposition party may argue as strongly as it likes before a vote is taken and talk just as strongly about the foolishness of the decision after the vote, but must still accept the decision as the law of the land until it has an opportunity to reverse the decision by another majority vote.**

**Thus the assemblies of the sages (as the Pharisee leaders were called before the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70, after which they became known as 'rabbis') made decisions, but did not invest these decisions with divine authority. The opinions of dissenting minorities were carefully recorded and included in the records such as the Mishnah, so that it may become the basis of new decision in the future, if required (just as today the opinions of dissenting judges are recorded in the High Court and are cited as support if an attempt is made at a later date to bring in a new ruling).**

**Thus the Pharisees avoided the option, open to all religions based on a scripture believed to be divinely inspired, of adding the infallibility of the Church to the infallibility of scripture. Instead they developed the concept of a scriptural canon which was the center of human attention and was constantly being scrutinized in the light of the human intellect; and, even more important, they had the idea that God Himself wished this process of human reasoning to go on without interruption by Himself, and that He approved the struggles of the human mind to interpret His design for the universe, even if these efforts were not free of error: 'According to the effort is the reward.' Thus the Pharisees were able to disagree with each other without quarreling and without persecution of dissenting views; for difference of opinion was itself an essential ingredient of their concept of the religious life, rather than a danger to it.**

**Answer for yourself: That being the case then how do you explain Paul being a Pharisee with no religious tolerance which was characteristic of the Pharisees?**

**They did, however, occasionally resort to disciplinary measures against rabbis (such as the great Rabbi Eliezer), not because of their dissentient views, but because of their refusal to accept a majority vote that had gone against them.**

**It was only in the sphere of religious law, though, that such disciplinary measures (consisting essentially of social ostracism of the offender for a period) were taken. In the sphere of theology, where there was no urgent need for a practical decision, no such measures were taken. A wide variety of views was tolerated by the sages and their successors, the rabbis, without any accusations of heresy. Thus, in the matter of the belief in the coming of the Messiah, or the definition of the nature of his reign, it was possible for a respected rabbi to take the view that there would be no personal Messiah in the future at all, since all the biblical Messianic prophecies had been fulfilled in the person of Hezekiah. This was an unusual, even eccentric, view, but the rabbi in questions was not regarded as in any way a heretic. This contrasts strongly with the heresy hunts and bitter factionalism of Christianity, which burnt people at the stake for having unusual views about the nature of Christ (a name that is only the Greek form of the Hebrew word *Messiah).* The Pharisees distinguished between what they called *halakhah* ('going') and *aggadah* ('telling'), and whilst they demanded conformity, after full discussion, in *halakhah,* they allowed full scope to individual styles of thought in *aggadah,* which they regarded as poetry rather than as theology.**

**Though not addicted to heresy hunting, the Pharisees did regard certain groups as heretical, largely because these groups did not accept the concept of the Oral Law. The most powerful group regarded as heretical by the Pharisees was that of the Sadducees, of whom frequent mention is made in the Gospels, where they are described as opponents of the Pharisees, without any clear exposition of the point of conflict involved. The antagonistic relation between the Pharisees and the Sadducees is of the**

**utmost importance in understanding both Yeshua and Paul, and the times in which they lived. They did not get along and social interaction was kept to a minimum.**

**The essential point at issue between the Pharisees and the Sadducees was the validity of the Oral Law, but this point was far from academic, for it led to enormous differences of outlook on social and political questions, as well as in the practice of religion. Rejecting the Oral Law, the Sadducees saw no need for a class of interpreters, sages or rabbis engaged in expounding the scriptures in accordance with new ideas and circumstances. The difference between the Sadducees and the Pharisees is thus brought out clearly in the type of religious leader which they respectively revered. The Sadducees turned for leadership to the priests and especially the High Priest, while the Pharisees were led by very different personalities, whose character was determined by the demands of the Oral Law. The priests were a hereditary caste, descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses. They had a special function to perform in the service of the Temple, and were supported by the tithes levied from the whole population, though not compulsorily. To look to the priesthood for leadership was thus to put the Temple into the center of one's religious life. Three institutions thus comprised the focus of Sadducee religion: the Bible, the Temple and the priesthood.**

**For the Pharisees, on the other hand, the priests and the Temple had only a secondary importance. They regarded the priests not as leaders or spiritual guides, but merely as ceremonial functionaries, who had the job of keeping the Temple sacrifices going and administering the maintenance of the Temple generally. Even the High Priest was regarded as a mere functionary and had no authority to pronounce on matters of religion. It was a Pharisee saying that 'a learned bastard takes precedence over an ignorant High Priest', and most High Priests were in fact regarded by the Pharisees as ignorant.**

**Instead of the priests, the Pharisees looked for guidance to their own leaders, the *hakhamim* (sages), who were not a hereditary class but came from every level of society, including the poorest. The *hakhamim* or rabbis were really lay leaders, who achieved their authority by their ability to master the extensive materials that comprised a Pharisee's education. This included not only the whole Hebrew Bible, which was regarded as merely the first step in education, but also the whole superstructure of law, history, science and homiletic exegesis *(midrash)* which had accumulated in the Pharisee academies. A Pharisee leader had to be both an expert lawyer and an inspiring preacher, for the Bible itself contains both the outline of an entire legal constitution and a conspectus of history with a theory of the spiritual mission of the Jewish people and its place in God's purposes for humanity. Thus a Pharisee sage might one day be acting as a judge in a complicated case involving the laws of damages, and the next day he might be preaching in the synagogue about God's love for the repentant sinner, using for his sermon not only instances drawn from the Bible but also moving, simple parables drawn from his own imagination or from the Pharisee stock of homiletic material. In performing these tasks, the sages did not at this stage of history become a professional class; the general pattern was that each sage had his own profession by which he made his living, some of these professions being humble in status, and he gave his services to the community without pay or, at the most, with compensation for the hours lost from his own profession.**

**In consequence of the shift of authority from the priests to the sages, the place of the Temple itself was different in the world of the Pharisees from that which it occupied for the Sadducees. The Temple was not a place of study, but of ceremonial and sacrifice, and, while the Pharisees acknowledged the importance of animal and vegetable sacrifices (since the Bible had instituted them), they did not consider these ceremonies as central to their religious life, which focused rather on the acquisition of knowledge about how people should live together in society, and on the carrying into practice the principles of justice and love. The institution in which this process of communal education was pursued was not the Temple, but the synagogue. The Pharisees were the creators of congregationalism: the fostering of the local religious community.**

**This decentralization and diffusion of religion into manifold local centers was typical of Pharisaism, and this meant that the common people regarded the priesthood in Jerusalem as rather remote and unreal figures compared with their local sage, to whom they could come with their problems and who gave them regular instruction in the synagogue. He came from their own ranks, and claimed no aristocratic superiority over them; nor did he claim any magical or mystical authority, but only a wider range of learning, which he encouraged**

**them to acquire, since learning was regarded as the duty of every Jew and as the basis of all useful and virtuous living. Thus the Pharisees were not only the founders of congregationalism, but also the founders of the idea and practice of universal education, though here they claimed to be merely fulfilling the injunctions of the Bible itself, which stresses the duty of education in many passages.**

**In combating the authority of the priesthood, the Pharisees did not regard themselves as innovators or revolutionaries, but rather as the upholders of authentic Judaism. Let me remind you that it was only the Pharisees who survived the destruction of Israel and the Temple in 70 A.D. In the Bible the chief teaching role in religion is given not to the priests, but to the prophets, who had no hereditary claims and might come from any section of the people. Moses, the founder of Israelite religion, did not make himself High Priest, but gave this role to his brother Aaron, a relative nonentity. The rabbis thus regarded themselves as the heirs of the prophets and especially of Moses, and as having the teaching role that had always been carefully distinguished, in Jewish practice and religion, from the sacerdotal role. The rabbis did not, however, claim to have prophetic gifts themselves; they thought that prophecy had ceased with the last of the biblical prophets, and would only be renewed in the Messianic age. Their task, as they conceived it, was to interpret the inspired words of scripture by a corporate effort, not unlike that of modern science, in which each rabbi contributed his own stock of thoughts and interpretations to a common pool. Consequently they developed methods of logical analysis and argument by analogy which produced in the Talmud one of the greatest achievements of the human intellect, discussing with the greatest intelligence and professional ability matters of morality, business ethics and legal administration in a manner far in advance of their age.**

**The Sadducees, on the other hand, regarded themselves as defending the status quo against the innovations of the Pharisees. The Bible, the priesthood and the Temple were the institutions which they honored: the Bible needed no complicated apparatus of interpretation, the priesthood needed no officious class of lay scholars to supplement it, and the Temple provided all the atonement required without a proliferation of synagogues for prayer, study and preaching. Many modern scholars have taken the Sadducees as the representatives of ancient Judaism, standing out against Pharisee innovation; but this picture has serious defects. The Sadducees were indeed defending the *status quo*, but it was a *status quo* of fairly recent duration, dating from the third century BC, when Judaea was ruled by the Ptolemaic Greeks of Egypt. Under this regime, the High Priest was given central status and power by the Greek overlords, successors in the region to the power of Alexander the Great. The High Priesthood in this era was made the instrument of foreign rule, a role which it was to retain into the era of the Romans. When the Pharisees arose as a distinctive movement, around the period (c. 160 BC) of Jewish rebellion against foreign rule (which had meanwhile passed from the Ptolemaic Greeks of Egypt to the Seleucid Greeks of Syria), they were opposed to the priesthood not only for religious, but also for political reasons. They wished to free the Jews from the stranglehold of the priesthood not only in order to return to the old prophetic ideal of lay leadership, but also in order to return the priesthood to its proper biblical role as a guild of ceremonial officials, rather than a center of political power.**

**The political opposition of the Pharisees to the High Priesthood continued even after the victory of the Jews over their foreign Greek rulers; for the Hasmonean dynasty, which then took power over their fellow Jews, combined the monarchy with the High Priesthood, thus increasing further the political power of the High Priesthood. The Pharisees bitterly opposed this constitutional development, and consequently suffered persecution from the Hasmonean kings. The record of the Pharisees as opponents of power is utterly unknown to those who base their ideas of the Pharisees on the biased and inadequate picture of them given in the Gospels. Far from being oppressors, the Pharisees were continually the party of opposition. A far better picture of them, from the political standpoint, can be gained from the writings of Josephus, who in fact opposed them as troublemakers and thorns in the flesh of the political authorities.**

**It should be noted that, though the religious position of the Sadducees gave the highest role of authority to the priests, it would not be true to say that the priesthood on the whole supported the Sadducee standpoint. Most of the rank-and-file priests were Pharisee supporters and were thus opponents, both politically and religiously, of the corrupt High Priest. Like the majority of the Jewish people, these ordinary priests**

**accepted the Pharisee leaders, the sages, as their spiritual guides, and did not presume to offer themselves as rival authorities merely on account of their Aaronic descent. They accepted that, as priests, they were merely Temple officials and not religious teachers; some of them even entered the Pharisee academies and trained to be sages themselves - for no one was debarred from becoming a sage, not even a priest.**

**Among the priests, it was chiefly a few families of great wealth and political influence with the reigning power who were Sadducees. The Sadducee party, indeed, formed a small minority among the Jewish people, comprising wealthy landowners as well as wealthy priests. People such as these were the natural allies of whatever authority happened to be in power, whether Ptolemaic Greeks, Seleucid Greeks, Hasmoneans, Herodians or Romans. The Sadducees were thus cut off from the sources of popular unrest. The Temple, as the visible center of Judaism, could be taken over by any ruling power and provided with a regime of collaborators. But the real centers of Jewish religious authority, the synagogues in which the Pharisee leaders presided, were too humble and too decentralized to be taken over, even if the Roman authorities had known that this was where the road to control of the Jews lay. In the time of Yeshua and Paul, the occupying power was the Romans, who actually appointed the High Priests, just as Herod had done before them. They imagined that by appointing some subservient quisling to the post of High Priest, they had assumed control of the Jewish religion, little realizing that Judaism was a religion in which the apparent spiritual head, the High Priest, was in reality of little account, being personally despised by the majority of the Jews, and even in his official capacity regarded as having no real authority.**

**It is impossible to understand the events of the time of Yeshua and Paul without a clear understanding of the equivocal role and position of the High Priest in Jewish society - on the one hand, a figure of gorgeous pomp leading the splendid ceremonial of the Temple and, on the other, a person of no authority. The ordinary reader of the Gospels assumes, naturally enough, that the High Priest was a figure corresponding, in the Jewish religion, to the Pope in the Catholic Church or the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Church of England. This mistake arises from the fact that in the Christian religion the ceremonial role has always been combined with the teaching role: the Christian priest performs the mass and also teaches the people through sermons and lessons. Christians are thus unfamiliar with the fact that in Judaism these two roles have always been distinct: the man who performs the sacrifices does not pronounce on theology or religious law, or adopt the role of inspirer or prophet. The Jewish division of roles has been of inestimable benefit to the survival of the Jewish religion, for it has meant that the corruption or destruction of the apparent centers of the religion has had little effect on its continuance. The High Priesthood frequently became hopelessly corrupt, but as long as there were movements like Pharisaism to revive the sources of authority among the laity, the religion was not seriously affected. Even the destruction of the Temple, which in the eyes of non-Jewish observers spelled the death of Judaism, had no such result, since the vitality of the religion did not depend on the Temple worship or on its practitioners.**

**The corruption of the High Priesthood in the time of Yeshua and Paul is also attested by the literature of the Dead Sea sect or Essenes. This sect, however, was very different from the Pharisees in their reaction to their perception of corruption in the Temple and the High Priesthood. The Pharisees were able to cooperate with the High Priesthood precisely because they did not regard it as important. Since, to them, the High Priest was a ceremonial functionary, not a figure of spiritual power, it did not matter to them how inadequate he might be as a person, as long as he performed his ceremonial duties with a modicum of efficiency. Thus they saw to it that the High Priest was supervised by Pharisees in the performance of his duties, both to guard against his ignorance of the law and also to guard against any attempt on his part to introduce Sadducee practices into the order of the Temple service; once these precautions had been taken, they were satisfied, for the Temple service would be valid whatever the moral or theoretical shortcomings of the officiator. In practice, the High Priest almost always submitted to this Pharisee supervision, because of the pressure of public opinion.**

**The Dead Sea Scroll sect, however, took the office of the High Priest far more seriously than this and consequently, when they became convinced that the High Priesthood had become hopelessly corrupt, they withdrew from Jewish society altogether and formed a monastic community, dreaming and praying for the Last Days, when a pure Temple service would be restored. The Dead Sea Scroll sect actually had a far higher estimation of the role of the Temple and the priesthood than did the Pharisees, and recent scholarships'**

**indicates that they were probably a breakaway branch of the Sadducees (they called themselves the 'sons of Zadok'). They represent the religious ideals of the Sadducee sect before it became politicized and corrupt- a sect which genuinely believed in the central importance of Bible, Temple and priesthood, and opposed the lay movement of the Pharisees.**

**When we read in the New Testament of incidents in which the High Priest figures, either in relation to Yeshua or in relation to Paul, we have to rid ourselves of preconceptions about the role of the High Priest and try to understand the issues in the light of the historical facts. In particular, a flood of light can be thrown on the New Testament story by bearing in mind the deep antagonism between the Pharisee movement and the High Priest of that period, not only a Sadducee, but an appointee of the Romans and a quisling collaborator with Roman power.**

**Before we examine Paul and the New Testament in detail, it was necessary to get this foundation, knowledge, and truth about the Pharisees. You will see the importance of this as we begin to examine Paul and what is written about him being a Pharisee in the New Testament. Let us summarize as we close:**

- **Pharisees were know for their theological leniency**
- **The Pharisees championed theological diversity and matters of theological agreement were not required for fellowship (like disagreements on Messianic promises and prophecies).**

**As we close let us remember that if Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees then he sure was devoid of these two chief characteristics of the Pharisees which are attested in hundreds of places in their theological writings that survive today. One only needs to look at the Oral Law to see these principles in action.**

**Answer for yourself: Where do we have to look to find theological rigidity in Second Temple First Century Judaism? You got it; the Sadducees and this is where we find the Apostle Paul.**

**Let us continue our study in our next article. Shalom.**

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# PAUL AS A PHARISEE? TO MANY INCONSISTENCIES TO BE A PHARISEE

**Let us turn to the most important person in Christianity: Paul, the creator and proselytizer of the new faith to which, according to Acts, he also gave its name. In his letters, Paul represented himself as a born Jew, an ardent Pharisee, and, at one time, a persecutor of Christians.**

***Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, provides additional information which is not confirmed in Paul's Epistles and sometimes, contradicts them. Many New Testament scholars consider unreliable and invalid those declarations in Acts which differ from statements in Paul's letters or that are not mentioned there.***

**An example of this is the question of Paul's Roman citizenship which the author of Acts "conferred" on him some thirty years after his death. Critical scholars also doubt that Paul had any connection with Rabban Gamileal and his academy or even was in Jerusalem prior to his call. Other spurious claims made in Acts which are not substantiated in any of Paul's letters are;**

- **That Paul worked for the High Priest to ferret out "followers of The Way," an early term for Christians;**
- **That he was a member of the Sanhedrin; and**
- **That many Christians were sentenced to death by that body.**

**Now is where a "thinking" believer who has just a little background knowledge of the "times" in which Paul and Jesus lived encounter a multitude of problems!**

- **Evidently the author of Acts, a Gentile, did not realize that a Pharisee would not be in the employ of the Sadducee High Priest's police force. This would be comparable in the 1980s for a Contra in Nicaragua to he working for the Sandinistas. A "Pharisee" would not work for the Sadducees unless he were no longer a Pharisee. Nor would the latter have recruited him.**
- **As if that was not a big enough problem we find as well that Luke had little understanding of the composition and nature of the Great Sanhedrin. Although the name is not mentioned, Acts infers that Paul fulfilled the role which went with membership in that august body. For Luke to arrogate such a role to Paul is further proof that he had not the remotest idea of the place that legislative-judicial body occupied in Judean society. This was the most prestigious institution in Judea. Membership in it was bestowed on the most honored, learned and respected scholars. A man devoid of Jewish scholarship would hardly be a candidate for the Bet Din. Anyone familiar with methods of Rabbinical teaching quickly see when reading Paul's letters that he is not adept as "Rabbinical teaching;" for instance the rudimentary principles of "kal val homer" are literally butchered by Paul...thus**

**betraying his inability to "think" rabincially. For us today we would say that one is "incompetent in Bible 101."**

- **When Luke claimed that many saints were put to death, he was not aware of how difficult and rare it was for the Sanhedrin to invoke the death penalty. The stringent restrictions which had to be observed before a death sentence could be imposed, were of such a nature that few ever received the death penalty. Of course, if Luke were referring to a council under the auspices of the Sadducees who were responsible to the Romans, Paul would not have been eligible for this position either. These courts or councils might have proven to be harsher than those under the authority of the Pharisees. Luke's opponents are projected back as Paul's adversaries.**

**Although a number of scholars today deny that Acts can be reliably used to reconstruct Paul's biography and consider it primarily a literary drama, there are researchers who accept some of the stories and have produced archaeological evidence as confirmation. Inasmuch as Acts is a canonized book and is accepted by Christians throughout the world, I will deal with many of the anti-Jewish allegations in it as with all other antisemitic assertions in the New Testament in following articles and webpages.**

**The identification of the city of Paul's birth is a conundrum. Traditionally, his birthplace was considered to be Tarsus, the capital of the Roman province of Cilicia in Asia Minor (Turkey). This is stated in Acts. However, "Paul the Tarsan" can mean Paul, the weaver in Aramaic. There is a tradition that he earned his living as a tent-maker or a weaver of cloth for tents.**

**Although Paul included a few Aramaic words in his letters, such as *abba* for father, he wrote, spoke, and read in Greek. He gave no indication of a knowledge of Hebrew (thus would not be acceptable to the school of Gamileal).**

**Of major importance and a big problem is that when Paul referred to the Bible, he usually cited passages in the Pentateuch and the Prophets as they appear in the Septuagint or Greek translation, not as the Hebrew text reads. Any "Jew" or "Pharisee of the Pharisees" would have know of the terrible translation of the Septuagint and its hundreds of falsifications of the Jewish Masoretic text and like all other Jews would not have used this text to quote anything let alone words believed spoken by God. Yet Paul uses these alterations of the Jewish Bible freely in his epistles without ever flinching! This is very telling for we have suspicions that Paul was not familiar with Hebrew…a condition foreign to a Jew.**

**For example, in I Corinthians (I Cor. 15:54 Paul quoted from Isaiah 25:8 as follows:**

***Death has been swallowed up in victory.***

**However the verse in Isaiah from the Hebrew reads which Paul supposedly quotes reads differently:**

***He (God) will swallow up death (make death vanish) forever.***

**The Hebrew word for 'victory' and 'forever' is virtually the same. The distinction is understood from the context in which the word is used. Paul rendered the verse according to a Greek translation. Had Paul read the Bible in Hebrew, he would not have made this error. This is but one example of such mistakes. Paul's letters are filled with these kinds of Biblical renditions.**

**While his knowledge of Hebrew was limited or non-existent, he was fluent in Greek as one would expect of a Gentile who converted to Judaism as many did in the first century. Let us not forget that the Ebionite writers inform us that Paul was a Gentile who converted to Judaism. Besides one is hard pressed to name another Jew in the New Testament who has a Roman name besides Paul. Again this does not lend support that he would have been accepted to study with the master Gamileal.**

**When Paul claimed to be a Pharisee, he chose a respectable pedigree for himself. Unlike the Sadducees, the Pharisees were highly regarded by the populace whose religious values and political aspirations they shared. The subsequent denigration and maligning of the Pharisees in the Gospels have given them a bad name among those readers who have not sifted out the slander from the truth. In Paul's day to be a Pharisee was to be a member of a prestigious majority party.**

**Paul claimed in his letters that he persecuted the church before his conversion. That means that as a Pharisee he oppressed Nazarenes. But Pharisees did not oppose or persecute the Nazarene sect any more than they did the Essenes.**

**Answer for yourself: So what gives?**

**On the contrary, the Pharisees and Nazarenes shared many of the same beliefs: in one God, in the injunctions of the Torah, in the resurrection of the dead, and in the coming of a human messiah. There is no reason to persecute here. But a Sadducee would not and surely did not desire the coming of Messiah and the eventual war with Rome. The Nazarenes held that the messiah had come and was also a prophet. This was not a serious barrier between the two groups at that point in history. Differences between Nazarenes and Pharisees would not surface until a generation or two later when religious doctrines concerning the Messiah would be erroneously applied to the life and ministry of Yeshua (which anyone familiar with the facts of Yeshua's life clearly demonstrate otherwise). Then the Pharisaic teachings developed into a body of rabbinic literature which became authoritative for Jews. The Nazarenes believed in the sacredness of the Torah and Prophets but were unwilling to accept the authority of Rabbinic Judaism. This led to a cleavage between the two groups. However, it did not develop until years after Paul's death.**

**The Pharisaic view was expressed by Gamileal in Acts 5:34-39. He had a pragmatic, "wait and see" attitude about Yeshua as messiah. If Yeshua were like Theudas and Judah of Galilee, who had come to rescue Israel, he would fail. If Yeshua and his followers were "of God," they would succeed and no one would stop them in their mission. Both Pharisees and Nazarenes saw that mission as freeing Judea from the Romans. Paul had been arresting, imprisoning, and killing these people; definitely not something a Pharisee would have been doing but rather a Sadducee who was an ally with Rome and under orders to not allow religious rebellions to begin. Thus the quelling of the Messianic movement as was attempted by Paul.**

**In summary, upon coming to Jerusalem and after his falling out with the Chief Priest and the rest of the Sadducees, Paul identified himself with the Pharisees, who enjoyed great popularity and prestige, but he was not among its circle of scholars regardless of what is written about him in the New Testament. Internal evidences with the New Testament tell a different story. Paul did not claim that honor in his letters but did imply that he was very knowledgeable about, and deeply observant of, the Torah. It was said of him by others to those who did not know Paul and the conflict he endured from the Jerusalem church till his death. To say it mildly Paul was never an accepted apostle among those closest of Yeshua and for obvious reasons: Paul denied the role of circumcision, Paul denied of the Law for righteousness, Paul taught an unbiblical doctrine of vicarious atonement, Paul endeavored to cause the cancellation of kosher and clean/unclean for the Gentiles, etc. The problem only begins here for those who have deeply studied Paul. Shalom. You can find out the truth about Paul at:**

**http://paulproblem.faithweb.com**

**shalom.**

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# THE RE-EDITING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT...TO HELP COVER UP THE PAULINE PROBLEM

**If you read our previous article on the truth about the Pharisees, you have seen them in a totally new light other than what you are accustomed if your only source of information for them has been the New Testament and the Gospels.**

**Answer for yourself: In the light of the previous article on the Pharisees, it may well be asked, "if the Pharisees were indeed such an enlightened, progressive movement, why did Yeshua criticize them so severely?"**

**Good question. Let us see if we can find the answer.**

## RE-EDITING THE NEW TESTAMENT TO SLANDER THE PHARISEES AS A PRECURSOR TO CREATING A NEW GENTILE RELIGION

**I have already suggested in the previous article that Jesus did not historically criticize the Pharisees in many of the ways represented in the Gospels; he was indeed himself a Pharisee. Theological diversity and leniency was a trait of Pharisaical Judaism but that does not necessarily mean rejection and hatred among the ranks when disagreement occurred. The whole picture of Yeshua at odds with the Pharisees is the creation of a period some time after Yeshua's death, when the Gentile Christian Church, I said Gentile Church, was in conflict with Judaism and the Pharisees because of its claim to have superseded Judaism. The Gospels are a product of this later period; or rather, the Gospels consist of materials, some of them deriving from an earlier period, which were edited in an anti-Pharisee sense by Gentile believers who were promoting a replacement religion. With just a little historical knowledge coupled with a working knowledge of Biblical Judaism it is possible to refute the anti-Pharisee picture in the Gospels, which even after their reediting retain many details from the earlier accounts which show that Yeshua was not in serious conflict with the Pharisees on doctrinal points and was a Pharisee himself. Yeshua called only for Pharisees to live the life they professed and believed and not fail their calling as Godly examples and leaders; not only to their nation but to the the nations of the world to whom they were to be an illumination.**

## CAN YOU PROVE THIS RE-EDITING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BY THE GENTILE CHURCH? DOES THIS HAVE A BEARING ON PAUL AND THE JESUS-PAUL PROBLEM? YOU BET!

**The process of reediting and altering the New Testament is not just a hypothesis; it can be plainly seen within the Gospels by comparing the way in which the various Gospels treat the same incident.**

In order to prove this point and also show that such editing is not just concerning the Paul problem in the New Testament I have chosen to take time out of the Jesus-Paul Problem to demonstrate this process of reediting to show the reader just how prolific it was. **The fact that there are four Gospels, instead of just one, makes the task of reconstructing the original story much easier, especially when one bears in mind the results of modern scholarship, which have shown in what order the Gospels were written. According to the most firmly based scholarship Mark is the earliest Gospel, so we can often be enlightened just by comparing the version of Mark with that of any later Gospel.**

# JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF RE-EDITING OF NON-PAULINE MATERIAL...WE WILL GET TO PAUL RE-EDITING IN A MINUTE

To give just one preliminary example of this reediting by the Gentile church (and I could share many), we find in Mark an account of a conversation between Yeshua and a certain 'lawyer' (a term used as an alternative to 'Pharisee' both in the Gospels and in later Christian literature):

***Then one of the lawyers, who had been listening to these discussions and had noted how well he (Jesus) answered, came forward and asked him, 'Which commandment is first of all?' Yeshua answered, 'The first is "Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is the only Lord; love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' The lawyer said to him, 'Well said, Master. You are right in saying that God is one and beside him there is no other. And to love him with all your heart, all your understanding, and all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself- that is far more than any burnt offerings or sacrifices.' When Yeshua saw how sensibly he answered, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' (Mark 12: 34)***

**Another version of this story found in the later Gospel, Matthew, and is as follows:**

***Hearing that he had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees met together; and one of their number tested him with this question: 'Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' He answered, ' "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind." That is the greatest commandment. It comes first. The second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Everything in the Law and the prophets hangs on these two commandments.' (Matthew 22: 34-40)***

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice anything different between the earliest account in Mark and the latter account in Matthew? Did you know that the "congenial account" is placed after the "testing/opposition" account in the order of the books as placed in the New Testament? Was this purely accidental in light of the tone of the two accounts being completely opposite?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice the attitude of the latter encounter in Matthew was negative and was completely different from the prior account in Mark? Which is the true account?**

In this second and later version of the story in Matthew, the friendliness of the exchange between Yeshua and the Pharisee has been obliterated.

**Answer for yourself: Since the "friendly" account was written first (primacy of Mark) then what motive could there have been to change the account into one of hostility and "testing" by the writers of the New Testament? Surely you don't need me to answer that for you. Anti-Semitism is written into the New Testament all the way through it by it's Gentile authors and most people read it and never know the difference.**

Remember Mark's friendly and complementary account came first. The Pharisee questioner is not motivated by admiration in the Matthew account, as in the first version in the earlier Markan version ('noted how well he answered'), but merely wishes to 'test' Yeshua, i.e. try to catch him and show him

up or prove him wrong. In the first version, the Pharisee questioner is given a lengthy reply to Yeshua, praising him and adding a remark of his own about the superiority of love to sacrifices, and to this Yeshua replies with courteous respect, saying that his questioner is 'not far from the kingdom of God'. All this is omitted in the second version, which is just one more story about an envious Pharisee being silenced by the superior wisdom of Yeshua.

**Answer for yourself: Could this just be accidental altering of the story or was this planned?**

**Answer for yourself: If this had not been pointed out to you, and if you read the account of Matthew only since it comes first in your Bible, would you have the proper understanding of the Pharisees and Yeshua's relationship to them? No you would not.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Yeshua's teaching on the Greatest Commandment an original teaching with him? No.**

**It should be noted, too, that Yeshua' singling out of these two verses from the Hebrew Bible (one from Deuteronomy and the other from Leviticus) as the greatest of the commandments was not an original idea of his own, but an established part of Pharisee thinking that existed long before Yeshua was born.**

**The central feature of the liturgy created by the Pharisees (and still used by Jews today) is what is called the shema, which is the very passage from Deuteronomy cited by Yeshua: 'Hear O Israel: the Lord our God is the Only Lord; love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.' This injunction was regarded by the Pharisees as so important that they declared that merely to recite these verses twice a day was sufficient to discharge the basic duty of prayer. Interestingly, too, in view of Yeshua's final comment to the 'lawyer', the rabbis regarded these verses as having a strong connection with the 'kingdom of God' (a phrase not coined by Yeshua, but part of Pharisaic phraseology). They declared that to recite these verses comprised 'the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of God'. It should be noted that in Pharisaic thinking, 'the kingdom of God' had two meanings:**

- it meant the present kingdom or reign of God, or
- it could mean the future reign of God over the whole world in the Messianic age.

**It is possible to discern in Yeshua's frequent use of the same expression the same twofold meaning: sometimes he means a future state of affairs which he has come to prophesy (e.g. 'Repent, for the kingdom of God is near'), and sometimes he is referring to the present kingship of God, which every mortal is obliged to acknowledge (e.g. 'The kingdom of God is among you'). In the present passage, it seems to be the second meaning that is paramount. What we have is total agreement between Yeshua and the Pharisees in regard to their beliefs in this encounter.**

The other verse quoted by Yeshua from Leviticus, 'Love your neighbor as yourself,' was also regarded by the Pharisees as of central importance, and was treated by the two greatest figures of Pharisaism, Hillel and Rabbi Akiba, as the great principle of Judaism on which everything else depended. This did not mean, of course, that the rest of the law was to be ignored or swept away, just because this was the most important principle of it; on the contrary, the law was regarded as the working out and practical implementation of the principle of love of neighbor, giving guidance about how love of neighbor could be expressed in the complexities of daily life.

**Later Gentile Christian writers, misunderstanding Judaism on this point, thought that, when Yeshua singled out love of God and love of neighbor, he was thereby dismissing the rest of the Torah. There is no reason whatever to think that this was Yeshua's meaning, especially as he was in such cordial agreement with the Pharisee lawyer (at least in the earlier and more authentic account of Mark).**

The apparently disparaging remark of the 'lawyer' about the sacrifices should also not be misunderstood. He did not mean that he thought that sacrifices or the Temple worship in general should be abolished, only that the words of the Hebrew prophets should he borne in mind, warning

against regarding the sacrifices as a magical means of producing atonement, rather than as symbols of true repentance and reconciliation with God that precedes always the killing and the offering of the animal sacrifice. **The most awesome day of the Jewish year was the Day of Atonement, when sacrifices were offered in the Temple and the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness; yet it was Pharisee doctrine that none of these awe-inspiring ceremonies had any effect unless true repentance had occurred before the sacrifice and restitution had been made for any harm done to one's fellow man. So the Pharisee was not opposing the offering of sacrifices (which were prescribed in holy writ), but putting them into their proper place,** just as the Pharisees in general supported the Temple worship and the priesthood in their duties, but strongly opposed any tendency to regard all this as the be all and end all of Jewish religion, as the Sadducees tended to do. **The Christian's failure to understand the Jewish Sacrificial system has contributed to their erroneous concepts concerning atonement, and even attaching such beliefs to the death of Yeshua as if sacrifice without repentance atoned (which it did not). Here again, there is no reason whatever to suppose that Yeshua's attitude towards the Temple worship was any different than that of other Pharisees.**

# SO WHY DID I POINT OUT "RE-EDITING" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN AN ARTICLE ABOUT PAUL?

Simply because so much about Paul in the New Testament has been re-edited as well and to think that this literary device did not exist nor that is was not used often is a serious misjudgment and a poor assumption that is not bore out by comparative manuscript evidences.

**The analysis of this incident about Yeshua and the 'lawyer' thus shows two things:**

- That there was no disagreement between Yeshua and the Pharisees, and
- That there is a process of editing going on in the Gospels to make it appear that there was strong disagreement; even to the point of Jesus' rejection of Judaism thereby initiating the creation of a new religion under his name (don't forget the leniency of the Pharisees...which is not present in so many of the accounts between Jesus and the Pharisees).

Be not mistaken there is much editorial license that went on in the continual "fixing" of the New Testament; both in the Gospels and the Pauline epistles as well. This affects many of the stories of Jesus as well as Paul as we shall soon see.

For the later Gospel version (Matthew) turns an amicable conversation into a hostile confrontation. This does not mean that we may turn to the Gospel of Mark, the earliest Gospel, for an unbiased picture of the Pharisees; on the contrary, the Gospel of Mark is full of bias against the Pharisees as well, but, as the earliest Gospel, it has not carried through the process of anti-Pharisee reediting with quite such thoroughness as the succeeding Gospels, so that more of the original story as well as truth is still apparent.

But let it be said that truth does not always lie on the surface but must be filtered out among lies and distortions purposefully placed in the New Testament that give Rome the Creedal authority to create a new religion around the person of Yeshua. We already saw in the first article such creative license in the presentation of the New Testament hero, the Apostle Paul, as both Sadducee and Pharisee and also noticed the purposeful attempt to hide his Sadducee roots. Since the Sadducees were rejected by the people Rome cannot make Paul, a Sadducee, it's hero who evangelized the world with a new religion. Paul has to be made into a "Pharisee of Pharisees" no less. Likewise, we addressed in the second article the Pharisees and the historical truth about them as opposed to the Gentile slander written about them by the Gentile writers and redactors of the New Testament.

**Answer for yourself: How much more alteration of the truth concerning Paul can be found in the New Testament? You would not believe so lets prove it to you.**

# A PRINCIPLE FOR BIBLE STUDY IS ESTABLISHED

Here we hit upon an important principle of interpretation of the Gospels and the whole of the New Testament including the Pauline epistles: **when we come across a passage that goes against the grain of the narrative, we may be confident that this is part of the original, authentic narrative that has survived the operations of the censor.** **Since the general trend is anti-Pharisee, so that the narrative becomes more and more anti-Pharisee as it is successively re-edited,** any passages friendly to the Pharisees cannot be late additions to the text (for the motivation of the editor is to cut out such passages, not to add to them); instead they must be texts that survived that have escaped the eye of the editor. **This does not mean that a later Gospel or epistle must always, and in relation to every incident, be more thoroughly edited and less authentic than an earlier Gospel or epistle, for the various Gospels and epistles are not presenting the same material taken from only one source. Each Gospel, for instance, contains material for which it is not indebted to a previous Gospel and which it is handling as a first-time editor; these different sources of material have been labeled by modern scholars with capital letters such as Q. L, etc.**

**Consequently, when such an independent source is in question, a later Gospel may retain authentic early material not contained in an earlier Gospel. Any scientific study of the Gospels must always bear the above considerations in mind. It follows that, when we speak of a later Gospel taking the bias or tendency further, we mean that this occurs when both Gospels are handling material taken from the same source. This is the case in the example given above, where it is clear that the report of the incident of Yeshua and the 'lawyer' occurs first in Mark, and when it later occurs in Matthew, it is an adapted version produced by the author of Matthew on the basis of the report in Mark, which the author of Matthew had before him when he wrote his Gospel.**

**This is, of course, only a preliminary example.** Now follows a more extended argument to show that Yeshua was no antagonist of Pharisaism, but was himself a Pharisee. What follows will convince you that Yeshua did not set out to change the teachings of Judaism or create new doctrine concerning the Messiah or his mission.

**This argument is not a digression from the subject of Paul, the main concern of these series of articles, for the question of whether Yeshua was a Pharisee is most relevant to the question of whether Paul was a Pharisee. If differences can be found between them, differences where one is persecuted by the other (the group representing the other), then most likely they are not both "Pharisees" since the Pharisees exhibited doctrinal leniency. One of the two is not a Pharisee and we know for certain Jesus was not a Sadducee; so that leaves Paul who hounded the Messianic pharisees and even arrested and killed them.**

For the picture in the Gospels of Yeshua being hounded by the Pharisees is what gives credence to the later picture, in Acts, of Paul (or rather Saul) the Pharisee hounding the successors of Yeshua, the 'Jerusalem Church'. If Yeshua was never hounded by the Pharisees and was himself a Pharisee, it becomes all the more incredible to believe that Paul, when he hounded the 'Jerusalem Church', was actually a lenient Pharisee who allowed doctrinal diversity. The record in Acts states otherwise.

Paul had to be a Sadducee working for the High Priest. The lenient and tolerant attitude of the Pharisees and Gamaliel, the leader of the Pharisees in Paul's time, towards the 'Jerusalem Church'

**then becomes intelligible as merely a continuation of the friendliness of the Pharisees towards Yeshua; himself also a Pharisee. (THINK)!**

***The conclusion of this ministry is that Yeshua, usually represented as anything but a Pharisee, was one, in fact a super strict one boarding on Essenism in many ways, while Paul, always represented as a Pharisee in his unregenerate days, never was...his actions recorded in Acts betrays that Paul was a Sadducee***

**In the course of the argument, it will become plain why this strange reversal of the facts was brought about by the New Testament writers. I have already intimidated that if Rome was to use Yeshua to create a new religion, then cause has to be found for Yeshua to reject his present religion (Biblical Judaism) and his religion and religious leaders reject him in order for Rome to use Jesus as the catalyst for starting a new religion which they accomplished by fashioning Jesus in the image of a long line of sun-godmen...but that was not new to Rome. The event that gave Rome the authority to create a new "Jesus supported religion" other than Judaism comes from his "manufactured" split with Biblical Judaism and the Pharisees as seen in the constant quarrels between the religious leaders of Jerusalem and Jesus. That is why such events like the contention with the Pharisees over the Sabbath healing, the incident of the washing of the hands, and the eating of grain on the Sabbath was manufactured on purpose to again separate Jesus from Judaism and the Jewish leaders from Jesus. Imagine my surprise when I studied these events out thoroughly in Judaism and found no problems with what Judaism taught and their doctrines surrounding these three events. But yet again in the New Testament this becomes problem. We have here, as well as in many other places, Gentile creation of an artificial separation between Jesus and Judaism and this gives credibility for Jesus starting a new faith spearheaded my its main advocate, the Apostle Paul which takes this "changed message" into all the world. The only problem with such a split is that it never happened the way the New Testament records. So much for inerrancy and infallibility. So much for the New Testament being the Word of God. So much for Paul's characterization in the New Testament as a Pharisee of Pharisees. But we are not through with Paul by a long shot! See you in the next article. Shalom.**

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# ACTS AND THE ACCOUNT OF STEPHEN....TRYING TO COVER UP THE TRUTH ABOUT PAUL?

## TO SUMMARIZE WHAT WE HAVE SEEN SO FAR

### THE NEW TESTAMENT'S PREMISE THAT IS ACCEPTED TODAY

- **Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees**
- **Paul was a highly educated Pharisee who was an expert in the Jewish religion owing to the fact that was trained by the best; Rabbi. Gamaliel**
- **Being so highly trained above his peers, he was in a unique position to be the great interpreter of Jesus' role; thereby he alone was able to see, when others could not, the continuity between the new covenant and the old, and to guarantee, by his own bridging of the gap, that his unique interpretation of Jesus provides the true fulfillment of Old Testament religion.**
- **This unique understanding of Paul regarding Jesus, his atoning death, burial, and resurrection, is made to replace the prior message of God regarding how mankind obtains salvation and Eternal life**

### WHAT WE HAVE SEEN THOUGH OUR INVESTIGATION SO FAR

- **Paul was born in Tarsus, a Greek city that had a very small Jewish population**
- **Paul was a non-Jew who grew up indoctrinated with Gentile mystery religions which were themselves based upon sun-worship**
- **Paul, as an adult went to Jerusalem, where he became a convert to Judaism and affiliated himself with the High Priest and the Temple police**
- **Paul, in his employment by the High Priest and the Sadducees, were responsible for the harassment, arrest, and deaths of many Messianic Pharisee believers.**
- **Paul was a Sadducee and not a Pharisee; that is until he was not allowed to marry the High Priest's daughter whereupon he turned his back upon the Sadducees and desired acceptance by the Pharisees.**
- **In addition, the historical evidence from the book of Acts shows that when Paul persecuted Jesus' followers he was acting on behalf of the High Priest, who was a Sadducee and an opponent of the Pharisees, this shows once more that Paul was not a Pharisee.**
- **Understanding that Paul was not a Pharisee we better understand his persecuting role in relation to Jesus' followers contradicts evidence that the Pharisees did not persecute that movement at all; that the continuation of the picture of persecuting Pharisees from the Gospels is built on sand, for the evidence in the Gospels and from other sources is that Jesus was**

himself a Pharisee and was never persecuted by the Pharisees;

- The alleged evidence in Paul's writings that he had a Pharisee training is mere self-deception on the part of scholars who have persuaded themselves into finding what they were looking for...Paul's letters betray the fact that he was never schooled by R. Gamaliel or other Pharisaical institutions since they provide internal evidence of his inability to think, reason, or write in the accepted manner of the Pharisees
- Paul is best understood as an innovator, who created a myth about Jesus that had no roots either in Judaism or the actual historical circumstances of Jesus' life and teachings.
- We have also made mention of the fact that Jesus' movement, as it was before the advent of Paul, did not hold any religious doctrines that were foreign to the Jewish faith and that would have brought upon itself any persecution from the guardians of Jewish religion, the Pharisees. We even mentioned that speculation concerning the Messiah was not cause for ostracism or persecution by the Pharisees as their movement on the whole was known for its theological leniency.
- Any claim to be "the" Messiah of Israel was not in any way blasphemous; and his followers who had placed their hopes in him as the Messiah of Israel, after his death, had merely continued to believe in his Messiahship in the same way (having come to believe that he had been brought back to life by a miracle).
- The Apostle's belief in the resurrection of their Messiah did not mean that they entertained any beliefs concerning him that he was God. The Messiah of Israel was never understood to be deity, and if Jesus was to be their Messiah, then no one would entertain such beliefs that the Messiah of Israel was a God.
- The only Christian doctrines that would have been regarded as blasphemous by the Pharisees were those introduced by Paul some time after his conversion. Before the conversion of Paul, therefore, there can have been no clash between the Nazarenes and the Pharisees on religious grounds; though there may well have been conflict between the Nazarenes and the High Priest on political grounds, since the High Priest, the non-Zadok guardian of Roman interests, would certainly have regarded with suspicion a movement which still declared Jesus, a crucified rebel, as their leader.

# THE STEPHEN ACCOUNT....TRYING TO CHANGE THE TRUTH CONCERNING PAUL

**It is time to move on to other studies in this series. There is one episode recorded in the book of Acts, however, that seems to challenge all the conclusions summarized above. This is the story of the death of Stephen the first Christian martyr.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the account of the death of Stephen written in such a way as to cover up the truth and achieve a theological advantage for a certain group?**

**Answer for yourself: Has the account of the death of Stephen been "backwritten" in such a way to make it look as if the early Jewish church held a "Pauline religious belief system" when in reality they did not?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that Stephen's death was not because of "religious and theological" reasons as it appears in the text of Acts but was because of "political reasons" because active Messianism was basically political activism and this threatened the High Priest and the status quo of Roman peace in Jerusalem?**

**Answer for yourself: Has the unique religious understanding of Paul's gospel and his Jesus been backwritten by the later author of Acts in order to make it look as if these same "Pauline religious concepts concerning Jesus" had existed in the beginning of the infant church by those who knew Jesus best, when in reality the Jewish Church of Jesus had never believed such "doctrines" about Jesus?**

**Answer for yourself: Could the account of Stephen's death be an attempt by the later author of Acts to link Pauline theology with the infant church and thereby defuse the charges leveled against Paul much later that he was the inventor and originator of the doctrines of Christianity as applied to Jesus and not the Apostles who did not hold such beliefs about Jesus?**

**Answer for yourself: Could it be that the writer of the account of Stephen's death is "backwriting" the deification of Jesus and pushing it back in history to make it look as if was not a Pauline invention but that the first church also held to such ideas concerning the glorification and deification of Jesus as "the" Godman of Judaism?**

**Answer for yourself: Was the writer of the account of Stephen's death, himself a devotee of Paul (Luke), trying to link Pauline theology with the beginning of the Jewish Apostolic Church thereby showing the continuity of Pauline doctrine with the Apostles since Paul's doctrine of the Messiah was recognized my most Jews as purely creative genius loaded with heavy borrowing from pagan mystery religions and their ideas of their solar godmen?**

**As you can see not only the above questions but the very story of Stephen is very important; important for the following reasons:**

- **For here we have the story of a member of Jesus' movement who was put to death, not on political grounds as was Jesus, but on religious grounds, before the conversion of Paul.**
- **Moreover, Stephen, believed to be a follower of the Pharisee Jesus, is represented as putting forward views that were strongly opposed to those of the Pharisees (Jesus) and have much in common with the views held by Paul after his conversion.**
- **It argues that Paul was not the originator of Christianity as we know it**
- **That the deification of Jesus and the abrogation of the Torah were doctrines supposedly held by the Jesus movement before Paul came on the scene**
- **The case of Stephen shows that, despite all contrary arguments, these heretical doctrines go back to Jesus himself, Stephen being the link that connects Jesus to Paul.**
- **Moreover, the personal involvement of Paul in the execution of Stephen allegedly proves that Paul's opposition to Jesus' followers was on religious grounds, and reinforces the traditional view of Paul as a persecuting Pharisee.**

***Again I cannot stress the importance of this short story in the book of Acts because all of the above items in the list are derived from this story.***

**A careful examination of the Stephen episode, however, reveals many unhistorical features, and shows it has been built up by the authors of Acts precisely for the purpose of providing a link between Paul and Jesus (when really there are few or none).**

**Answer for yourself: Why is the creation of this link between Paul and Jesus so important?**

**This is most necessary since, as already stated and proven that the message and gospel of Paul is completely opposite the gospel and message of Jesus. Oil and water does not mix but somehow the author of Acts has to weave the two together in order for Paul to function as an "ambassador for Christ."**

# THE ACCOUNT OF STEPHEN...UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

**The story given in Acts is that Stephen was denounced to the Sanhedrin by a group of Jews who had been arguing unsuccessfully with him.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the charge against Stephen in the first place?**

**The charge against him was that he had made "blasphemous statements against Moses and against God". We are then told:**

***"They produced false witnesses who said, 'This man is for ever saying things against this holy place and against the Law. For we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and alter the customs handed down to us by Moses.'"***

- **He spoke against Moses**
- **He spoke against the Law**
- **He said Jesus will destroy the Temple**

**Stephen is then allowed a statement, and makes a long one which is a recapitulation of Jewish history. This speech seems mostly innocuous, giving an account with which all Jews would agree. At the end of his speech, however, Stephen launches into a diatribe against the Jewish people and their history, going far beyond the kind of self-criticism which Jews were in the habit of making. This diatribe amounts to a repudiation of the Jews as incorrigible enemies of God:**

**Answer for yourself: Do you not find it rather strange that a supposed Messianic believer who hopes for the redemption of the whole world and his people should turn upon his whole race and call his whole people (the Jewish nation) little more than enemies of God?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible to detect anti-Semitism in this statement and it that not rather strange coming from a Jew?**

***"How stubborn you are, heathen still at heart and deaf to the truth! You always fight against the Holy Spirit. Like fathers, like sons. Was there ever a prophet whom your father did not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One; and now you have betrayed him and murdered him, you who received the Law as God's angels gave it to you, and yet have not kept it."***

**Of course such a response angers his hearers. Stephen's response has little bearing, however, on the charges outlined before, that Stephen had spoken against Moses, against the Temple and against the Law. Nor does the ensuing episode in which Stephen has a vision of Jesus, whom he calls "the Son of Man," standing at the right hand of God.**

**Answer for yourself: Was unique beliefs concerning the Messiah or others possibly thought to be the Messiah considered blasphemy in a nation known for it's theological diversity and leniency toward religious beliefs? No, it was not!**

**Answer for yourself: Then how are we expected to believe the account in Acts where such "beliefs" constituted "blasphemy" when they did not? Have you ever studied "blasphemy" in Judaism to see if this charge brought against Stephen was even possible? I have! It wasn't!**

**Stephen's personal understanding of Jesus and his vision of him, little different from Paul's vision which he will have later, is all of a sudden considered blasphemy.**

**Answer for yourself: What does Stephen's spiritual sight and rhema concerning Jesus have to do with the charges of: speaking against Moses, speaking against the Temple, or saying that Jesus will somehow destroy the Temple...his original charges?**

**Stephen's vision, it is alleged and we are asked to believe, was regarded as blasphemy by Stephen's hearers, who immediately rushed him out to be stoned, oblivious of the fact that the "blasphemy" of seeing Jesus as**

the Son of Man at the right hand of God was not what he had been brought to trial for. **Yet the "witnesses" who had testified ("falsely", it is said, though apparently the author of Acts thinks that Stephen would have been right in saying such things) that Stephen spoke against Moses, the Temple and the law, change their role with great versatility and act as chief participants in the stoning of Stephen for quite a different charge, that of regarding Jesus as the "Son of Man".**

**Answer for yourself: Was Stephen killed because of a spiritual vision which he had that speaks of a "theological" issue or because of a "political" issue that involved speaking against the Temple and its imminent demise at the hands of returning Jesus?** It would seem that the political issues have been swept under the rug so to speak and the account is made to look as if a "personal religious belief system" was really the reason for Stephen's death!

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul persecuting the followers of Jesus as a Sadducee because of "individual personal religious beliefs" or because of the political threat that the High Priest feared if these religious beliefs caused a public disturbances or political uprising that got Rome's attention and involvement since a new Kingdom was to come and replace the one of Rome?**

**So as you can see the Stephen account in Acts is already twisted and the real reason for his death is changed from "political threats against the Temple and the Roman government's status quo" into "personal theological beliefs" concerning the identity of man supposed risen to Heaven who sits on the side of God.**

***If individual apocalytpic religious beliefs were against Roman Law then there would not have been enough prisons to hold all the Essenes of Israel in that day so we see that such eccentric religious beliefs were not a threat to Rome; only political anarchy and revolution which was involved in bringing the Kingdom of God to bear on Rome and the world.***

## THE SANHEDRIN...WHERE THEY CONCERNED WITH THEOLOGY OR WITH POLITICS?

This extraordinarily muddled account of Stephen (he is killed for personal religious beliefs and not the charges that brought him to trial) cannot be regarded as providing us with a reliable historical record of the death of Stephen or of his views...or even the Sanhedrin for that matter. . The Sanhedrin was a dignified body that had rules of procedure, and did not act like a lynch mob. It would not suddenly switch the charges against a defendant, or drag him out for execution without even pronouncing sentence or formulating what he had been found guilty of.

**Answer for yourself: How can we come to any idea of what the truth is concerning the trail of Stephen, let alone the trials of Jesus and Peter?**

**There is, however, one way in which we can throw some light on the events leading to Stephen's death, and that is by noting the** numerous similarities between the trial and execution of Stephen, as described in Acts, and the trial and execution of Jesus, as described in the Gospels. Such a comparison brings out numerous points of similarity between the two "trials", even including similarities of illogicality and muddle.

So great is the general resemblance that we must conclude that the "trial" of Stephen is simply a double or repetition of the "trial" of Jesus, and its puzzling features can be explained by reference to the fuller accounts of the earlier "trial"; the motives for the invention of fictitious aspects are the same in both.

**Stephen is accused of speaking against the Temple:**

***". . . we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place. . . ."***

**The same charge was made against Jesus:**

***"Some stood up and gave false evidence against him to this effect: 'We heard him say, "I will pull down this temple, made with human hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands"'" (Mark 14: 59).***

**To many the above similarities don't mean anything, but if you were conversant with Biblical Judaism and it's beliefs concerning it's Messiah then you would know for certain one thing that escapes most Christians: The Messiah will build Israel's New Temple. That is why I cannot get excited by the Temple Mount Faithful or any others who desire to begin construction on the Temple. The one I am waiting for is the one Messiah will build!**

**Since the Jews have always known, according to their religion and not the religion of Christianity, that their long awaited Messiah will build the Temple, then to hear someone declare an intention to pull down the Temple and rebuild it was regarded as natural and in character for someone claiming to be the Messiah.**

**Answer for yourself: Since the charges against Jesus and Stephen were that they had both "blasphemed" then is it correct to understand such intentions was to be understood by Jews as blasphemy when that was what their Prophets had predicted in the first place? It is time to wake up and begin to study to find the truth and see beyond the multitude of deceptions in the New Testament that keep you from the truth.**

**There was no blasphemy in making such a Messianic claim, for, in Jewish eyes, the Messiah was not a divine figure, but simply a human king, a descendant of King David, who would one day drive out the foreign invaders and restore the political independence of the Jewish people (threat to Rome); though some thought that this deliverance would coincide with the era of world peace prophesied by Isaiah and other prophets. The Messiah would naturally build a new Temple, for the present Temple, built by the wicked King Herod, was not expected to last into Messianic times. Jesus' threatened destruction and rebuilding of the Temple was an inevitable feature of his hopes of eschatological "restoration." For the majority of Jews, therefore, Jesus' promise to build a new Temple brought not outrage or shock, but hope; perhaps this man was indeed to be the promised Messiah, since he dared to talk in this vein. But events would not transpire in such ways necessary for the revelation of the Messiah to Israel and the world. The people who would have been annoyed, however, at Jesus' declaration were the reigning Temple Sadducees and hierarchy, who were collaborators with Rome (Saul the Sadducee), who owed their appointments to the Roman occupying forces, and had undertaken to help stamp out Messianic movements which might threaten the Roman occupation of Judaea.**

**Answer for yourself: Does this help explain why Paul was arresting the Messianic believers in conjunction with the High Priest's wishes in order to maintain the peace?**

**Jesus' declaration that he would pull down and rebuild the Temple was part of his challenge to Rome and to its priestly henchmen. Only the High Priest and his entourage (Saul and others like him) would feel threatened by it. Messianic Pharisees would be encouraged by it (remember the Gamaliel account...leave them alone...maybe it is of God...hope so). The rank-and-file priests, despite their daily participation in the Temple rites, would not feel threatened, because they would expect to continue their role in the rebuilt Temple. So this charge against Jesus was not a religious but a political charge - one which would stir the High Priest into action, but would not concern the Pharisees or any religious Jews**

**who were not committed to collaborate with Rome. The same political charge will bring Stephen's death...yet it is made to look like religious adversity that was responsible for Stephen's death in the Acts account.**

**Take time to notice, because it is very important, that Stephen is represented as repeating this threat of Jesus:**

***". . . we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place. . . .(Temple)"***

**It is a mistake to think that Stephen is here prophesying the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in AD 70. Stephen is speaking of Messiah's return to build the new Temple. Christians, indeed, have always regarded this destruction as a punishment for the alleged Jewish betrayal of Jesus, and Stephen's words here have been misread as confirmation of this. But if this were so, Stephen would not have said that Jesus would destroy the Temple, but that God would destroy it as a punishment for the death of Jesus. The parallel between Stephen's words and the actual threat uttered by Jesus during his lifetime is the clue to Stephen's meaning. Stephen believed that Jesus' absence from the scene was only temporary. Soon he would come back and resume his mission, which was to drive out the Romans and assume his position as God's anointed, on the throne of David and Solomon. Stephen, by repeating in his preaching the threat that had cost Jesus his life, was renewing Jesus' challenge to the Roman occupation and to its supporters, the High Priest and his entourage.**

**The strange switch by which the original charge is forgotten and a new ad hoc charge substituted is exactly similar in the trial of Jesus and in that of Stephen. In Jesus' trial, we have the following:**

***Then the High Priest stood up in his place and questioned Jesus: "Have you no answer to the charges that these witnesses bring against you?" But he kept silence: he made no reply. Again the High Priest questioned him: "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One? "Jesus said, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God and coming with the clouds of heaven." Then the High Priest tore his robes and said, "Need we call further witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What is your opinion?" Their judgment was unanimous: that he was guilty and should be put to death. (Mark 14:60-64).***

**In Stephen's trial, after the initial charge and Stephen's long, irrelevant reply, we find this:**

***"But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, and gazing intently up to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look,' he said, 'there is a rift in the sky; I can see the Son of Man standing at God's right hand!' At this they gave a great shout and stopped their ears. Then they made one rush at him and, flinging him out of the city, set about stoning him."***

**Answer for yourself: What is similar between both trials?**

- **The pattern of both trials, then, is that the defendant is charged with the offence of speaking against the Temple**
- **But this charge is forgotten when the defendant bursts out during the trial with what is regarded as a blasphemous statement.**

**Contrary to the manner and customs, let alone the Laws that regulated the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin, formal procedures are then thrown to the winds and the defendant is found guilty of an alleged crime committed during the trial itself, and different from the crime for which he was brought to trial in the first instance. This travesty of legal procedure in a body like the Sanhedrin, famous for the**

**dignity and formality of its legal procedures, is clearly fictional.** This conclusion is reinforced by the consideration that the alleged blasphemy is not blasphemy in Jewish law at all. To claim to be the Messiah was simply to claim the throne of David, and involved no claim to be God.

The title "Son of God" also involved no blasphemy, as every Jew claimed to be a son of God when he prayed daily to God as "Father". **The Davidic King, however, had a particular claim to this title, since God had made a special promise to regard Solomon and his successors as his "sons" (2 Samuel 7:14):**

***"I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."***

**Please notice that, so far from the title "Son of God" bringing with it divine status, it made the Jewish King especially liable to divine punishment if he sinned.**

To claim to be "the Son of Man" was also not blasphemy, since this was also a title of the Messiah (derived from Daniel 7:13) and did not imply divinity.

Neither "coming with the clouds of heaven" nor "sitting at the right hand of God" constituted blasphemy, since the epithets were applied to the Messiah by Jewish tradition without entailing any doctrine of the Messiah's divinity. **There is a midrash that says that the Messiah will sit on God's right hand and Abraham on His left (Maccoby, The Mythmaker, p. 76-77)**

**Answer for yourself: What else should we have learned here today?** Nowhere in Judaism do we find any concept connected to their Messiah that he will be God; such is true blasphemy and Jesus never taught nor claimed that. We have to look to the converted Paul for that as he shapes a human Messiah into a Essene Angel-Messiah sun-godman who dies for his followers and offers salvation to them if they believe in him and partake of his eucharist.

## THE TRIAL OF PETER AS CONTRASTED WITH THOSE OF STEPHEN AND JESUS

**We need to recall what we have learned of the Pharisees in the prior articles. We saw that they were known for their theological diversity and their leniency. We also made special note that** claiming to be the Messiah was not a "theological" crime or "blasphemy" as many, in the history of Israel had been "anointeds" of the LORD. We took special time to make the distinction between the "religious" and "political" significance of the term "Messiah" and showed that it was the "political" understanding of the term that threatened the High Priest who worked from Rome. **Being expected to keep the people in a relative state of "calmness" the High Priest was ever vigilant and on the lookout to quell any possible Messianic insurgence. This is where our friend Paul, a Sadducee, makes his entrance as he was in the High Priest's employ as part of his Temple police force.**

***Acts 9:1-2 1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. (KJV)***

**Now I ask, since our little refresher on the leniency of the Pharisees and the harsh strictness of the Sadducees, that we focus upon the account of the trial of Peter and contrast the leniency bestowed against the harshness of the trials of Stephen and Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.**

**The accounts of the trials of Jesus and Stephen before the Sanhedrin are quite inconsistent with the account given of the trial of Peter before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5), in which Peter was defended by Gamaliel, and an attitude of tolerance was shown towards the Messianic claims of Jesus and other Messianic claimants. Gamaliel was by no means an untypical Pharisee, being their chief representative.**

**Answer for yourself: Why was Gamaliel, the chief Pharisee of his day, who advocated lenience toward Peter and John, no where to be found at the trials of Jesus and Stephen which were supposedly connected by his Sanhedrin?**

**Answer for yourself: Why should the trials of other Messianics like Jesus and Stephen have been so different from the trial of Peter?**

**Answer for yourself: How can we account for the unanimous hostility and intolerance that was shown towards Jesus' Messianic claims at his trial, and the same hostility displayed at Stephen's references to Jesus as the Messiah by the same people that were noted for their theological leniency which again is displayed much later at the trial of Peter? We cannot! Is this an example of mob schizophrenia?**

**The trial of Peter is perfectly credible in the light of what we know of the Pharisees and of their thinking on the subject of Messianic movements, while the "trials" of Jesus and of Stephen are incredible, because they depend on a definition of the terms "Messiah", "Son of God" and "Son of Man" that did not exist in the Jewish religion of the time, but did exist in the later doctrines of the Christian Church, when all three expressions had been given a connotation of divinity.**

**Answer for yourself: Could it have been little more than literary invention by the writer of Acts to completely misrepresent the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin, their procedures, and their trials, in an attempt to interject the later unique and un-Jewish theological doctrines of Paul into the picture of the early church and make it appear to the reader that such "Pauline Messianic doctrines concerning Jesus" were believed by the first Jewish followers of Jesus, and that these unique Pauline views were distinctive of the Messianic branch of Judaism but not indicative of all of Jewish beliefs concerning their Messiah? You bet it could. It happened.**

**Answer for yourself: Could this be an attempt to say, in accordance with accepted Pauline theology at a later date (Jesus is the Son of Man, Son of God, Divine Godman Messiah), that the Messianic Jews who believed in this Jesus who did not fulfill the Jewish prophecies nor returned as he said he would, were right and that the normative conservative Jews who sill awaited the fulfillments of the prophecies and the coming of their Messiah were wrong?**

***We must conclude, therefore, that the trials of Jesus and of Stephen have been falsified in exactly the same way: namely, an originally political charge has been worked over in order to represent it as a religious charge of blasphemy.***

**The facts in the case of Stephen appear to be that he roused the anger of the High Priest's entourage by outspoken declarations of the approaching fall of the Temple and its establishment, on the return of Jesus and his defeat of the Romans and their hangers-on. Since Stephen represented a threat to the crumbling power of the High Priest, he was assassinated without a trial by henchmen of the High Priest; unlike Jesus, he was not handed over to the Romans for punishment. Stephen was thus the first martyr of the**

**"Church" in Jerusalem; but when the Pauline Christian Church took over the leading role, its Gentile leaders faced the same difficulties with Stephen as those which had led them to depoliticize the condemnation of Jesus and to remodel it as a trial for heresy and blasphemy. They could not demote Stephen from his honored role as first martyr, but they changed the reasons for his martyrdom in order to disguise his anti-Roman (Gentile) motivation and make him into a victim of Jewish religious intolerance instead.**

**Stephen, therefore, cannot be regarded as a precursor of Paul in regarding Jesus as a divine figure with the authority to abolish the Torah (no matter what Pauline esoteric Messianic doctrines were backwritten and put into his mouth in this corrupted earlier account of Stephen). The Gospels and the book of Acts are hoping that the reader make the connection that Stephen, in his defense, is preaching "Pauline Messianic Christianity" and hopes the reader believes that Paul was preceded in his doctrines by Stephen and indeed by Jesus himself; but close scrutiny shows that this is an illusion, and that Paul's doctrines were a new departure, radically different from the claims and teachings of Jesus and the "Jerusalem Church".**

**We can now return to the consideration of Paul, with a full consciousness of the startling originality of his interpretation of the life and death of Jesus.**

**In the light of the above interpretation of the standpoint of Stephen, we may discern the probable meaning of the puzzling beginning of Acts 8, following immediately on the death of Stephen:**

***"This was the beginning of a time of violent persecution for the church in Jerusalem; and all except the apostles were scattered over the country districts of Judaea and Samaria."***

**It is, of course, extremely puzzling that the body of Jesus' followers were persecuted and ejected from Jerusalem, yet their leaders were allowed to remain. One would have thought that the leaders, in such a persecution, would have been the first to be ejected. This verse, therefore, has been taken to provide evidence that the "Jerusalem Church", at this time, contained two factions, the "Judaizers" and the " "Hellenists". The "Judaizers", on this theory, were led by James and Peter, who had turned away from the radical, heretical views of Jesus and had returned to allegiance to the Torah and traditional Judaism. The "Hellenists", on the other hand, continued to hold the anti-Torah views which had brought Jesus to his death, and their leader was Stephen, who had thus incurred the wrath of strict adherents to Judaism. After Stephen's death, his followers of the "Hellenistic" party suffered a persecution which forced them out of Jerusalem, but the "Judaizers" who followed James and Peter were unaffected by this persecution.**

**The existence of such a party of "Hellenists" depends entirely on this one verse, taken together with the earlier verses describing the complaint of the "Hellenists" about the distribution to widows. The word "Hellenists", however, does not signify any kind of unJewish religious faction, but refers only to the language primarily spoken by the members of the group. Jews who spoke Greek were not necessarily any less loyal to the Torah than Jews who spoke Hebrew or Aramaic, as the same chapter in Acts testifies, when it singles out the members of Greek-speaking synagogues as allegedly adopting a bigoted attitude towards Stephen. There is no real reason to suppose, therefore, that there was any "Hellenistic" free-thinking group among the "Jerusalem Church", beloved as this fiction is to commentators.**

**The real explanation of the immunity of the Apostles (and, presumably, their closest followers) from the persecution is probably this. Stephen was the leader of the activist section of the "Jerusalem Church", which believed in continuing anti-Roman propaganda and Messianic activity even in the absence of Jesus. The Apostles, however, took a more quietist view: Jesus, they believed, was on the point of returning, but in the meantime they would wait quietly in hope and refrain from any political activity until they could engage in it by his personal direction. Consequently, when the activist members were ejected by the pro-Roman High Priest's**

**party after the assassination of Stephen, the quietist section of the Nazarenes was left alone.**

**It should be noted that belief in Jesus could actually lead to the cessation of Messianic activity; for example, the Jewish Christians withheld their support from the Messianic revolt of Bar Kokhba, not because they were pacifists, but because Bar Kokhba was not Jesus and was, therefore, in their eyes the wrong Messiah.**

# PAUL'S PART IN THE PERSECUTION OF STEPHEN

**We may now turn to consideration of the part played by Paul personally in the persecution of Stephen. We are told:**

***"The witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. So they stoned Stephen, and as they did so, he called out, 'Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.' Then he fell on his knees and cried aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them,' and with that he died. And Saul was among those who approved of his murder. "(Acts 7:59-60).***

**Some scholars have thought that this passage smacks too much of literary artifice to be regarded as historically true. It introduces the character of Saul, later to prove the hero of the whole book of Acts, in a dramatic way, underlining the contrast between his personality before his conversion and after it. Though Paul, in his Epistles, expresses contrition for his earlier role as a persecutor of Jesus' movement, he never mentions that he had anything to do with the death of Stephen; in fact, he never mentions Stephen at all. It may be argued that the author of Acts, having given the death of Stephen such a prominent place as the first Christian martyr, could not resist the theatrical touch of introducing Saul into the scenario at this point. For if indeed Saul played a subordinate role in the Stephen affair in the manner described and if Paul himself never referred to the matter, it would be hard to see how the author of Acts could have obtained information about Saul's participation, and it would seem more likely that he invented it as a graphic addition to the story.**

**On the other hand, there is an aspect of the matter that has been overlooked. This is that Saul is in some ways excused for his role in the Stephen affair. It is said that he was only a "youth" at the time (the Greek word "neanias" means an adolescent youth, and is somewhat inadequately rendered by the New English Bible translation "young man"). This means that his responsibility is lessened; and this impression is reinforced by the way in which he is given no active role in the execution of Stephen. He does not throw any stones, but only looks after the coats of those who do. His participation is confined to "approving" the killing of Stephen. It seems that the author of Acts cannot bear the idea that Saul might have had active responsibility for bloodshed and thus makes him more a passive spectator than a wholehearted participant.**

**Some scholars, in addressing Saul's limited involvement of only "holding the coats of those who stoned Stephen" suggests a "doctoring" of the original account and is little more than a watering down of Saul's involvement in the death of Stephen. By turning Saul into a "youth" and by making him the person at whose feet the witnesses laid their cloaks, the narrator has made the presence of Saul seem peripheral and almost accidental - a kind of symbolic coincidence, fraught with ironic meaning in view of Saul's future. But according to the Ebionite account, Paul did not come to Judaea from Tarsus until he was a grown man. This is also partly confirmed by the narrative of Acts, which, without any apparent interval, presents us with Saul "harrying the church" and "seizing men and women, and sending them to prison", hardly the activities of a tender youth. So the likelihood is that Saul, being already a full member of the High Priest's police force, played a prominent part in the Stephen affair, not the peripheral role given him by the author of Acts. The death of Stephen, as argued above, was not a judicial sentence, but an assassination carried out by the henchmen of the High Priest, a police force consisting of heterogeneous elements and not characterized by any elevated ideology or nice scruples. It is not surprising that, later in his life, Paul, having transformed his persecution of the Nazarenes into an ideological affair motivated by Pharisaic zeal, suppressed the worst aspect of this phase of his career, his prominent role in the elimination of Stephen as a**

**dangerous anti-Roman agitator.**

**It is worthy of note too that the persecutors of Stephen are never called Pharisees in the narrative of Acts; nor is Saul himself at this stage of the story identified as a Pharisee. It is only in the light of the later identification of Saul as a Pharisee that generations of readers have assumed that Saul's participation in the murder of Stephen and his harrying of the Nazarenes arose from Pharisaic zeal.**
**The author of Acts is evidently working, in the early chapters of his story, from sources that have not yet identified Saul as a Pharisee; though Paul's own assertions to this effect in his letters have colored the later chapters of Acts.**

**We have arrived, then, at a picture of Saul that is quite different from the fire-breathing Pharisee fanatic of tradition.**

**Answer for yourself: How, then, did Saul, the police mercenary in the service of the Sadducean High Priest, a man of doubtful antecedents and few ideals, come to be converted to Jesus' movement, engage in controversy with its leading figures, and eventually transform it into a new religion which Jesus himself would have regarded with dismay and consternation?**

**It is to those answers we turn next.**

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# THE ARTIFICIAL CREATON OF JUDAISM'S REJECTION OF JESUS AND JESUS' REJECTION OF JUDAISM

We spoke in the last article about the extensive reediting of many of the accounts in the New Testament for theological agendas. We saw how Paul, a Sadducee, was painted with Pharisee strokes in the New Testament to make him more appealing since the Sadducess were a hated lot. The Pharisees were completely misrepresented on purpose by the New Testament writers. Lastly we saw that conflicts were artificially manufactured between Jesus and the religious leaders of his day in order to artificially separate Jesus from his faith and separate the religious leaders of Israel from Jesus, thereby giving Jesus the reason to establish a new religion that was just waiting for Paul to be the ambassador to the nations.

**Now we move on. An important ground of conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees, according to the Gospels, was Yeshua's insistence on healing on the sabbath, which was allegedly against Pharisee law. The Gospels allege that the Pharisees not only criticized Yeshua for healing on the sabbath, but schemed to bring about his death for this reason (Mark 3: 6; Matthew 12:14).**

**Answer for yourself: Jesus is also credited with certain arguments which he put to the Pharisees to defend his practice of sabbath healing: for example, that since circumcision was permitted on the sabbath, why should healing be forbidden (John 7:23)?**

It is an amazing fact that, when we consult the Pharisee law books to find out what the Pharisees actually taught about healing on the sabbath, we find that they did **not** forbid it, and they even used the very same arguments that Yeshua used to show that it was permitted.

**Answer for yourself: Then who is responsible for these lies written in our New Testaments? Would a Jew write this because he did not know his own faith well enough to represent it correctly, or could a Gentile be responsible for artificially separating Jesus again from Judaism and separating Judaism from Jesus for reasons listed above?**

**Moreover, Yeshua's celebrated saying, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath," which has been hailed so many times as an epoch-making new insight proclaimed by Yeshua, is found almost word for word in a Pharisee source, where it is used to support the Pharisee doctrine that the saving of life has precedence over any of the laws of the sabbath. So it seems that whoever it was that Yeshua was arguing against when he defended his sabbath healing, it cannot have been the Pharisees. It might surprise you to know that the categories of work that were prohibited on the Sabbath were those categories of work that were required in building the Temple, and rolling grain in the field in your hands (harvesting) was not one of the prohibited categories in the first place!**

**Answer for yourself: Then who is responsible for these lies written in our New Testaments? Would a Jew write**

**this because he did not know his own faith well enough to represent it correctly, or could a Gentile be responsible for writing such a lie in order to artificially separate Jesus again from Judaism and separating Judaism from Jesus for reasons listed above; namely provide the reason for Jesus to break from Judaism and create a new religion which Paul could promote?**

**An indication of who these opponents really were can be found in one of the sabbath stories. Here it is stated that, in anger at Yeshua's sabbath healing, the Pharisees "began plotting against him with the partisans of Herod to see how they could make away with him" (Mark 3: 6).**

**Answer for yourself: Why would that be when healing was never a violation of the Sabbath; in fact healing was a picture of the Eternal Sabbath or the world to come when no sickness or illness will prevail? (THINK).**

**The partisans of Herod (i.e. Herod Antipas, ruler, by Roman appointment, of Galilee) were the most Hellenized of all the Jews and the most politicized, in the sense that their motivation was not in the least religious, but was actuated only by considerations of power. An alliance between the Pharisees (who were the center of opposition to the Roman, occupation) and the Herodians is quite impossible. But an alliance between the Herodians and the Sadducees was not only possible but actual. The Sadducees, as explained above, though ostensibly a religious party, were so concerned to preserve the status quo that they had become henchmen of Rome, their leader, the High Priest, being a Roman appointee, entrusted with the task of serving the interests of the occupation. It seems most probable, then, that, by an editorial creationism and the necessity of editorial intervention, the name "Pharisees" was substituted here for the original "Sadducees", and this is probably the case, too, in the other stories in which Yeshua is inexplicably arguing a Pharisee viewpoint about the sabbath against the Pharisees (really the Sadducees). The Sadducees, we know, had a stricter viewpoint about the sabbath than the Pharisees, and (though this cannot be documented, since no Sadducee documents have survived) it may well be that, unlike the Pharisees, they forbade healing on the sabbath ( but for certain the Pharisees did not). This, at any rate, is a hypothesis that makes sense, whereas the stories as they stand, with Pharisees wishing to kill Yeshua for preaching their own Pharisee doctrine, make no sense at all. But that goes for much in the New Testament as well when one knows Judaism, the religion of Jesus. If you love Jesus the why don't you begin to study his faith; Jesus was a Jew...he was not a Gentile Christian!**

**Since Yeshua certainly came into conflict with the High Priest of his day, who was a Sadducee, it would be quite natural for stories to be preserved in which Yeshua figures as an opponent of Sadducee religious doctrines, even though, as we shall see, the chief point of conflict between Yeshua and the Sadducees was political rather than religious.**
**In the Pharisee literature many stories are found about Pharisee teachers who engaged in argument with Sadducees. A frequent topic of these debates was the question of the resurrection of the dead, in which the Pharisees believed, and the Sadducees disbelieved. As it happens, such a story has been preserved in the Gospels about Yeshua (Mark 12:18-27 and parallels). The answers given to the Sadducees by Yeshua are typical of those given by Pharisees in their debates. Even among non-Jews it was too well known that the Pharisees believed in resurrection for these stories to be re-edited as confrontations between Yeshua and the Pharisees, so they were left unaltered - interesting evidence of the status of Yeshua as a Pharisee, though, of course, the Gospels represent Yeshua as arguing, not as a Pharisee, but simply as one whose views happened for once to coincide with those of the Pharisees.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the motive for the re-editing of stories about conflicts between Yeshua and the Sadducees so that he was portrayed as in conflicts with the Pharisees instead (altering the account as if his opponents were Pharisees when in reality they were Sadducess)?**

**The reason is simple. The Pharisees were known to be the chief religious authorities of the Jews, not the Sadducees. In fact, at the time that the Gospels were edited, the Sadducees had lost any small religious importance that they had once had, and the Pharisees were the sole repository of religious authority. As we shall see shortly in more detail, it was of the utmost importance to the Gospel**

editors to represent Yeshua as having been a rebel against Jewish religion, not against the Roman occupation. The wholesale reediting of the material in order to give a picture of conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees was thus essential to their plan of creating an artificial separation and rejection of Yeshua and Judaism, and Judaism and Yeshua. This was done to clear the way for the establishment of a new religion by Yeshua since he has turned his back on Biblical Judaism. And Paul will be his spokesman! Also, since it was known that the Sadducees were collaborators with Rome, any substantial picture of opposition by Yeshua to the Sadducees, even on purely religious grounds, would have given an impression of Yeshua as an opponent of Rome - just the impression that the Gospel editors wished to avoid.

That there was in reality no major conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees which would entail Yeshua forsaking his faith and creating another one is shown by certain telltale features which have been allowed to remain in the narrative. An important example is: "At that time a number of Pharisees came to him and said, 'You should leave this place and go on your way; Herod is out to kill you.'" Here we find the same Pharisees we are expected to believe want him dead and try to plot his death are waring him of the plot to kill him and are urgently trying to save his life. This passage has puzzled all the commentators. My advise to the revisionists that altered the New Testament is that if you are going to change it please do a better job for their sloppy attempts to reedit it negatively against the Pharisees does not succeed when passages like this one remain within it.

**Answer for yourself: Why should the Pharisees, who, in previous stories, have been represented as longing for Yeshua's death because of his sabbath healings come forward to give him a warning intended to save his life?**

**Some pious Christian commentators, anxious to preserve the picture of malevolent Pharisees, have concocted an elaborate scenario in which the Pharisees were playing a double game: knowing that there was more danger for Yeshua in Jerusalem than in Galilee, they gave Yeshua a spurious warning about Herod in order to induce him to flee to his death in Jerusalem. Apart from the fact that this is mere fantasy, it is hardly likely that if the Pharisees had previously shown themselves to be Yeshua's deadly enemies they could expect Yeshua to accept a message from them as actuated by the friendliest of motives. So this explanation does not hold water.**

**This story indeed is valuable evidence of friendly relations between Yeshua and the Pharisees; to give such a warning the Pharisees must have regarded Yeshua as one of their own. The very fact that this story is so inconsistent with the general picture of Yeshua's relations with the Pharisees in the Gospels guarantees its historical truth (remember we discussed in an earlier article that when one statement goes against the grain more than likely it is the "truth?). Such a story could not have been added at a late stage in the editing of the material, but must be a survival from an early stage which by some oversight was not edited out. This story alone brings into question all the others whereby we find serious contention between Jesus and the Pharisees; even those where they plot his death.**

**Answer for yourself: Plotting to kill one of your own for theological diversity is rather strange for a group of lenient theologians would you not say?**

**An important indication that the stories about Pharisee opposition to Yeshua on the question of sabbath healing are not to be taken at face value is the fact that there is no mention of this charge at Yeshua's trial.**

**Answer for yourself: If Yeshua, as the Gospels represent, actually incurred a capital charge in Pharisee eyes because of his sabbath activities, why was this not brought against him at a time when he was on trial for his life?**

**Answer for yourself: Why, in fact, is there no mention of any charges brought specifically by the Pharisees at Yeshua's trial (THINK!)? You see that with a few facts concerning Judaism the reediting of the accounts in the New Testament by Gentiles betray not only their lack of knowledge and understanding of Judaism but also betray their tampering of the truth for theological agendas. Jesus and Paul are not immune to such tamperings**

**as I have shown you.**

**As you shall see soon, Yeshua's trial was not on religious charges at all, but on political charges, though the Gospels, pursuing their general aim of depoliticizing Yeshua's aims, try to give the political charges a religious flavor.**

**Answer for yourself: Yet, if the trial really had been a religious one, who better than the Pharisees, the alleged bitter religious enemies of Yeshua, to play the most prominent part in the proceedings...and they did not; it was the High Priest was it not?**

**Answer for yourself: Why was it that the Pharisees did not defend Yeshua at his trial, in the same way that Gamaliel, the leader of the Pharisees, defended Yeshua's disciple Peter when the latter was put on trial before the religious Sanhedrin?**

**The answer is that the Pharisees were not even present at Yeshua's trial, which was not before the religious Sanhedrin, but before the political tribunal in which the High Priest which was held not only at night but on a festival day which was prohibited by Law. The High Priest was the representative and henchman of the Romans and it was he who presided over a court of his own minions.**

## IS CLAIMING OR BEING CLAIMED TO BE THE MESSIAH BY OTHERS GROUNDS FOR ONE'S DEATH?

**Answer for yourself: If the matter of sabbath healing, eating grain on the sabbath, or washing of the hands cannot be substantiated as a ground of conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees, what about the other features of Yeshua's teaching which the Gospels represent as revolutionary and offensive to the Jewish religious authorities of the time?**

**Answer for yourself: What about Yeshua's claim to be the Messiah?**

**Answer for yourself: Was not this blasphemous in the eyes of the Pharisees?**

**Answer for yourself: What about Yeshua's threat to destroy the Temple- an allegation brought against him at his trial?**

**Answer for yourself: What about his aspiration to reform or even abrogate the law of Moses (a charge made concerning him but a teaching which he never professed [Matt. 5:17]?**

**The answer is that none of these matters constituted any threat to the religious view of the Pharisees, and on examination we shall find that on all these matters Yeshua's view were pure Pharisaism and one that confirms that he was himself a member of the Pharisee movement.**

**Yeshua's claim to be the Messiah was not in any way blasphemous in the eyes of the Pharisees or, indeed, of any other Jews, for the title "Messiah" carried no connotation of deity or divinity. The word "Messiah" simply means 'anointed one", and it is a title of kingship; every Jewish king of the Davidic dynasty had this title. To claim to be the Messiah meant simply to claim the throne of Israel, and while this was a reckless and foolhardy thing to do when the Romans had abolished the Jewish monarchy, it did not constitute any offense in Jewish law. On the contrary, the Jews all lived in hope of the coming of the Messiah, who would rescue them from the sufferings of foreign occupation and restore to them their national independence. Anyone who claimed to be the promised Messiah (prophesied by the prophets of the Hebrew Bible and not the Greek translations which were corrupted) who would restore the beloved dynasty of David would be sure of a sympathetic following. Yeshua was by no means the only person during this period to make a Messianic claim, and not one of these other claimants was accused of blasphemy. These Messianic claimants were not all of the same type: some were warriors, like Bar Kokhba or Judas of Galilee,**

**while some were non-militarist enthusiasts, like Theudas or "the Egyptian" (both mentioned in the New Testament as well as in Josephus 4), who gathered a crowd of believers and waited confidently for a miracle by which the Romans would be overthrown. Yeshua was of the latter type like "the Egyptian," he expected the great miracle to take place on the Mount of Olives, as prophesied by Zechariah chapter 5. Some Messiahs had the limited aim of merely liberating the Jews from Rome, while others, of whom Yeshua was one, expected this liberation to be the precursor of an era of peace and liberation for the whole world, when, in the words of the prophets, the swords would be beaten into ploughshares, and the wolf would lie down with the lamb. But none of these aspirations had any tinge of blasphemy; on the contrary, they were an integral part of Judaism, in which the Messianic hope was the logical outcome of belief in the One God, whose reign would one day extend over all humanity.**

**In later Christianity, however, after the death of Yeshua, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Messiah* (i.e. "Christ") had come to mean a deity or divine being. Consequently, Gentile Christians reading this "incorrect divine meaning attached to the Hebrew word "messiah" back into Yeshua's lifetime, found it easy to believe that Yeshua's claim to Messiahship would have shocked his fellow Jews and made him subject to a charge of blasphemy. Claiming to be the Messiah or others claiming that for you was not a crime punishable by death let alone a crime of any nature.**

**The Gospels, indeed, credit Yeshua with a concept of his own Messiahship that was different from that of his fellow Jews; but even if this were the case, since he used the word "Messiah" about himself, his fellow Jews would have no reason to believe that he meant anything abnormal by it, especially as, according to the Gospels, he was so reticent about the alleged special meaning that he attached to this word that even his own disciples did not understand his meaning. Consequently, no charge of blasphemy could arise from a concept that was never divulged. In historical scholarship, however, the idea of an undivulged Messianic concept ("the Messianic secret") is merely an attempt by later Christians to attribute to Yeshua an idea that in reality did not arise until after his death.**

**It is interesting, again, that in the Synoptic Gospels it is never the Pharisees who accuse Yeshua of blasphemy on Messianic grounds, but only the High Priest. This indicates that the charge against Yeshua for claiming to be the Messiah was not a religious charge at all, but a political one. It was no infringement of Pharisee law to claim to be the Messiah, but since "Messiah" means "kin," and since the Romans had abolished the Jewish monarchy, anyone who claimed to be the Messiah was acting subversively towards the Roman occupation, and, as the Roman-appointed quisling whose task was to guard against anti-Roman activities, the High Priest would be bound to take an interest in any Messianic claimants with a view to handing them over to the Romans. for punishment. The Gospels, however, in pursuance of their policy of representing Yeshua as a rebel against Jewish religion, depict the High Priest as concerned about blasphemy rather than rebellion.**

**Similarly, the charge against Yeshua that he threatened to destroy the Temple and rebuild it was brought against him only at his trial, and the Pharisees are not associated with this charge. This is indeed a political, not a religious charge, for the Temple built by Herod was not expected by the Pharisees to last into the Messianic age. Yeshua very probably did declare his intention of destroying the Temple and rebuilding it, for this is just what anyone seriously claiming to be the Messiah would do. The Pharisees had no superstitious veneration for the Temple, and would not be horrified at the idea that Yeshua intended to build a new one, like his ancestor Solomon. The only people who would be seriously upset by such an intention would be the High Priest and his entourage, who could expect to see themselves swept away by the projected Messianic regime. Indeed, at the time of the Jewish War in AD 66, the first thing that the rebels against Rome did was to dismiss the High Priest and appoint a new one from a family uncontaminated by collaboration with Rome. Yet again, this charge is represented in the Gospels as a religious charge of blasphemy instead of as a political charge of rebellion against the status quo, in which the High Priest and the Temple were instruments of Rome.**

**As for the alleged reforms of Judaism which Yeshua is represented as advocating, none of these, on examination, proves to be in breach of Pharisee ideas. Thus we are told that Yeshua opposed the concept of "en eye for an eye," found in the legal code of the Hebrew Bible, substituting the law of love for the law of revenge. This is a travesty of the situation in Pharisaism. The Pharisees did not regard the expression "an eye for an eye" as a literal legal prescription. They poured scorn on such an idea as quaint and uncivilized (asking, for example, "What happens if a one-eyed man knocks out someone's eye?"). They regarded the expression "an eye for an eye" as meaning that in principle any injury perpetrated against one's fellow man should be compensated for in accordance with the seriousness of the injury. Indeed, the legal code of the Hebrew Bible itself provides for such compensation, when it states that loss of employment and doctor's bills must be paid for by the person responsible for an injury (Exodus 21:19). So clearly the Pharisees were not putting any strained interpretation on the Hebrew Bible when they understood the expression "an eye for an eye" to refer to monetary compensation rather than savage retribution. As for Yeshua's further recommendation that one should not seek compensation if injured, but should offer the other cheek, he certainly did not extend this idea to freedom from any obligation to compensate for injuries that one may have committed. As a counsel of perfections (not as a practical law), the idea of refusing to receive compensation was an option in Pharisaic thought too; but this did not mean that injuries could be committed with impunity without any remedy in law; on the contrary, the very person who was ready to waive his own legal right to compensation would be the first to uphold the right of others, especially if he himself had injured them. This is an area in which confusion of thought is rife, and Yeshua is credited with upholding a definition of the "law of love" which is mere nonsense, and would result in a society in which oppression and violence would reign unchecked. The Pharisees too believed in the "law of love," as is shown by their doctrine that love of God and love of fellow man are the basic principles of the Torah; but love of one's fellow man is shown more by a determination to secure his rights than by a blanket abolition of all rights. There is no reason to suppose that Yeshua held such a foolish doctrine, or that his views were different from those of other Pharisees.**

**As for Yeshua's individual "reforms" of Jewish laws, these were nonexistent. We find in Mark 7: 19 an expression which has been translated to mean that Yeshua "declared all foods clean", but this translation has been much disputed, and many scholars regard the phrase as an editorial addition anyway. In another passage, we find Yeshua explicitly endorsing the Jewish laws of purity, when he tells the leper he has cured, "Go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering laid down by Moses for your cleansing".**

**True, we find Yeshua speaking in the tone of a reformer in the Sermon on the Mount, when he says, "You have learned that our forefathers were told.... But what I tell you is this." Here he seems to assume a tone of authority and an independence of previous teaching which would justify the description of a "reformer". However, since the whole episode of the Sermon on the Mount is Matthew's invention (the sayings being found scattered over various episodes in the other Gospels, except in Luke, where the sermon is transferred to a plain and the grandiose note of authority is missing), the simplest explanation is that the reformer's tone has been imported into the story by later Christian editors, to whom the idea that Yeshua taught with the same kind of authority as other Pharisee teachers was unpalatable.**

**An interesting episode that seems to support the picture of Yeshua as a ruthless reformer of the Torah and as unconcerned with the observance of its laws is the corn-plucking incident, which first occurs in Mark:**

***One sabbath he was going through the cornfields; and his disciples as they went, began to pluck ears of corn. The Pharisees said to him, 'Look, why are they doing what is forbidden on the sabbath?' He answered, 'Have you never read what David did when he and his men were hungry and had nothing to eat? He went into the House of God, in the time of Abiathar the High Priest, and ate the consecrated loaves, though no one but a priest is allowed to eat them, and even gave them to his men.'"***

**He also said to them, *"The sabbath is made for the sake of man and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of Man is sovereign even over the sabbath."***

**This incident cannot be explained as having been originally an altercation with the Sadducees, for the Pharisees**

**did indeed forbid the plucking of corn on the sabbath, together with all other forms of agricultural labor. So Yeshua, by allowing his disciples to pluck ears of corn on the sabbath, was flouting a clear Pharisee law, or so it appears.**

**An indication that all is not as it appears, however, is Yeshua's saying at the end: "The sabbath is made for the sake of man and not man for the sabbath." This, as previously mentioned, is a Pharisee maxims, and it gives the key to the whole incident. For the Pharisees used this maxim to show that in circumstances of danger to human life the sabbath laws could be, and had to be, ignored. In the story as it stands, there was no danger to human life to excuse the disciples from ignoring the sabbath law; but, as we examine the story further, we find more and more indications that the circumstances did indeed involve extreme danger.**

**Yeshua in his explanation to the Pharisees cites, in true Pharisee fashion, an episode from scripture as the ground of his attitude to the corn-plucking. This is the case of David and his violation of the sanctity of the shewbread; and this case is explained in the Pharisee literature (with good support from the actual text) as having been one of extreme danger to life, since David and his men were dying of starvation in their flight from King Saul. That is why, in Pharisee theory, David and his men were justified in eating the holy shewbread, though in circumstances where there was no danger to human life this was regarded as a heinous sin. Since the case of David was one of extreme emergency, it would seem to be an absurd instance for Yeshua to give unless the circumstances of himself and his disciples were equally desperate at the time of the corn-plucking incident. If, as the narrative seems to indicate, they were engaged merely in a leisurely stroll through the cornfields on the sabbath, and the disciples idly plucked and munched the corn for want of anything better to do, the David incident would have been quite irrelevant (apart from having nothing to do with the sabbath). If we restore the element of emergency to the narrative, however, it suddenly makes perfect sense.**

**Yeshua and his followers, in flight from Herod Antipas and the Romans, at the last extremity of exhaustion and hunger arrive at a cornfield. It is the sabbath day, but Yeshua, judging the situation to be, like the case of David, an emergency in which all ritual observances, whether of the sabbath or the Temple, are abrogated by Pharisee law, allows his disciples to satisfy their hunger by plucking corn. Later, when questioned about the incident by some Pharisee friends, he explains how he came to rule that the sabbath law should be broken.**

**This explanation also throws light on another puzzling point. To pluck ears of corn from a field was not only a breach of the sabbath law, but also a breach of the law against theft. Some Christian scholars have tried to cover this point by referring to the law in Deuteronomy 23:25-26: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with shine hand." This, however, as the Pharisee literature shows (e.g. Mishnah Bava Metzia 7:2) applies only to workmen who are working in a field for the owner; life would soon become impossible for farmers if every casual passer-by were allowed to take his fill of corn.But in cases of danger to life, the laws of theft were regarded as null and void - in fact, Pharisee law regards it as a duty to steal in order to save life. Yeshua, therefore, was quite entitled, in Pharisee thinking, to disregard the law of theft as well as the law of the sabbath in such circumstances.**

**Answer for yourself: Why then, was the element of emergency removed from the story as we have it in the Gospels, thus reducing the whole episode to nonsense?**

**The answer is: for the same reason that the element of emergency has been removed from the whole of the Gospels, which portray Judaea and Galilee as peaceful areas under benign Roman rule, instead of what they were in historical reality at this time, areas of bitter unrest and constant rebellion against the savage oppression of the Romans and the depredations of the tax-farmers (or publicans). If the sense of emergency had been retained in the story, not only would it have to be revealed that Yeshua was not flouting Pharisee law but also that he was a hunted man, wanted by Herod and the Romans, and in rebellion against them (indicating that Rome saw him guilty of a political crime and not a theological one).**

**Thus the corn-plucking incident, so far from telling against the view that Yeshua was a Pharisee, cannot be**

**understood except on the hypothesis that Yeshua was one. His use of biblical precedent and of a Pharisee maxim in order to establish that exceptional circumstance warranted a breach of the law are entirely in accordance with Pharisee practice and principles, and do not justify an interpretation in terms of rebellion against the law. Yeshua's final remark, ". . . therefore the Son of Man is sovereign even over the sabbath," is generally held to mean the Yeshua was declaring his lofty independence from Jewish law and his right to abrogate its provisions at will. This, however, is not necessarily the meaning of the sentence. The expression "son of man" in Aramaic simply means "man" or "human being." The meaning could therefor be, "Human beings are more important than the sabbath," a sentiment with which all Pharisees would agree. Many of the puzzling "Son Man" sayings in the New Testament can be explained on similar line though a residue remains in which Yeshua uses the expression "Son Man" as a title expressive of his own role. As a title, it by no means implies divine status, but rather prophetic status; it is used throughout the book of Ezekiel in this sense.**

**The alleged conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees on the question of his association with "sinners and publicans" also requires some comment. The mistake usually made is to think that these people were not really sinners in any serious sense, but were merely lacking in respectability or apt to neglect the laws of ritual purity. In fact, neither respectability nor ritual purity were the issues; the "publicans" were gangsters, torturers and murderers who assisted the Roman tax farmers in extorting goods and money from their fellow Jews to the point where many committed suicide or became outlaws rather than face penury or slavery. Yeshua, however, fully confident in his nationwide campaign of "repentance," preparatory to a Messianic miracle of national redemption from Rome, approached these desperate sinners not because he loved their company, but in the hope of converting them from their evil ways. Those "publicans" or tax-gatherers who were touched by Yeshua's appeal did not remain publicans. An example is Zacchaeus (Luke 19), who renounced his whole way of life and undertook to restore all the loot he had gathered and also give half his possessions to charity. This is just the mode of restitution prescribed for repentant tax-gatherers in the Pharisee work the Tosefta. Some scholars have alleged that the Pharisees held out no hope of repentance to tax-gatherers. This is not true, but they certainly regarded repentance and restitution as very difficult for themes It may be that, in this instance, there was a genuine point of disagreement between Yeshua and the other Pharisees, Yeshua being confident of converting the tax-gatherers, while other Pharisee teachers thought that association with gangsters would be more likely to affect the would-be converter for the worse than the gangsters for the better.**

**It should be remembered that Yeshua would have been a most unusual Pharisee if he had never disagreed with other Pharisees. As explained earlier, amicable disagreement was an essential ingredient in Pharisaism, and the Pharisee literature is full of disagreements between the various sages of the movement. In some cases, the New Testament has created conflict between Yeshua and the Pharisees, not by altering "Sadducees" to "Pharisees" or by removing some essential element from the story, but simply by turning what was originally a friendly argument into a hostile confrontation.**

# SO WHAT HAVE WE CONSISTENTLY SEEN IN THIS ARTICLE?

**Thus in various ways, Yeshua has been isolated in the Gospels from the movement and religion to which he belonged, the Pharisees. Yet, despite every effort to turn him into an isolated figure, a figure separated from his religion and whose religion has separated from him, his identity as a Pharisee remains indelibly stamped on him by his style of preaching. His use of parables (often thought by people unfamiliar with Pharisee literature to be a mark of his uniqueness) was typical of Pharisee preaching; and even his quaint expressions such as "a camel going through the eye of a needle," or "take the beam out of your own eye" are Pharisee expressions found in the Talmud. This is true, of course, only of the Yeshua found in the Synoptic Gospels (i.e. Mark, Matthew and Luke). This again is nothing more than artificial creations of "separation myths" intended to separate Jesus from his faith and his faith from him. This lays the groundword for the creation of a replacement religion that seems to be sanctioned by Jesus and missionized by Paul.**

**In the Fourth Gospel, that of John, Yeshua has become unrecognizable. He uses no parables, nor any idiosyncratic rabbinical expressions; instead he spouts grandiose Hellenistic mysticism and proclaims himself a divine personage. Here the authentic Yeshua has been lost in the post-Yeshua myth. It is not here that we find the genuine Yeshua, rooted in the Jewish religion of his time, and pursuing aims that were intelligible to his fellow Jews. In order to locate the historical Jesus one must look beyond the New Testament.**

**Let us continue to investigate if Paul was ever a Pharisee and we have been taught to believe. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HIGH PRIEST….PROVES PAUL A SADDUCEE AND NOT A PHARISEE

**The High Priest, as we have seen (and as the New Testament bears witness), was the leader of the Sadducees and, as such, was in continual conflict with the Pharisees, not only on religious matters but also on the political question of how far to collaborate with the Roman occupation, where the main difference between them was that the Sadducees were willing to cooperate *actively* with the Romans, even if this meant handing over troublemakers to them for execution. As an appointee of the Romans, the High Priest was not just a ceremonial official with jurisdiction over the Temple; he was, in effect, a chief of police with his own armed force, his own police tribunal which was concerned with political offences, and his own penal system, including prisons and arrangements for flogging offenders. In the case of capital offences, however, such as serious insurrection against the power of Rome, he would hand over the offender to the occupying Roman power rather than attempt to impose sentence himself (so you see the Jews could not bring the death penalty during Roman occupation so the Romans, not the Jews, killed Jesus). The situation can best be understood by comparison with occupied France during the Second World War.**

**It is thus incredible that a prominent Pharisee, or indeed any Pharisee, would enter into close association with the High Priest, as Saul is reported to have done, for the purpose of dragging off to the High Priest's prisons persons whose only offense was to hope for the fulfillment of the Messianic promises of Israel and see in Jesus their hope possibly fulfilled. Any type of Messianic gathering or riot or movement could spell the destruction of Israel if not severe penalty. It was the High Priest's job to keep the peace and these Messianics were constant problems. These Messianics has to be kept in order and this was police work, for the High Priest was no grand inquisitor, concerned with pursuing heresy. Moreover, as a Sadducee, the Chief Priest was regarded by the majority of the Jewish nation as a heretic himself, and would have been the first to suffer if there had been an Inquisition among the Jews. Let us remember at that time the office of the High Priest was held no longer by those of Zadok line, but was often purchased by those who had the most money. The only reason why the High Priest could use force at all is that he had been provided with the means by the Romans for their own purposes; and, though the High Priests were not above using the machinery for their own benefit (the sources attest that they used police officers to collect the priestly tithes by force, though they were supposed to be voluntary), their main concern was to produce results required by their Roman masters.**

**Thus, if Yeshua's movement had been a heretical one, espousing theological doctrines that contradicted the traditional tenets of Judaism, the High Priest would have been entirely unconcerned, being no theologian. If the movement had been opposed to the Pharisees in matters of religion, the High Priest would even have been pleased, for that was his position also. As a matter of fact, the Gospel writers, in their anxiety to put heretical doctrines into Yeshua's mouth, occasionally give him things to say that are Sadducean in character, and have evidently been taken from Sadducean polemics against the Pharisees. The only circumstances under which the High Priest would employ his police force to arrest and imprison**

people would be if they had shown themselves in some way to be a political threat to the Roman regime. The Messianics were the chief concern as you can see for the High Priest. Something had to be done before it got out of hand and Rome responded with violence. If Saul was employed by the High Priest to arrest people and imprison them, it can only mean one thing: that Saul was a member of the High Priest's police force and his job was to arrest anyone who constituted a threat to the occupation. The last person who would be employed by the High Priest in such a capacity would be a Pharisee: thus the inescapable conclusion is that Saul was not a Pharisee.

**This conclusion is so inescapable that even scholars who never envisage the possibility that Paul was not a Pharisee make admissions that bring them very near to it. Thus, Johannes Munck, in his book on the Acts of the Apostles, says that, in view of the evidence that the Pharisees were friendly to the Nazarenes, it must be concluded that Saul was the only Pharisee who joined forces with the High Priest to persecute the movement: 'The only Pharisee in the service of the chief priests was Paul, who had left Gamaliel and become an ardent persecutor of the Christians before an even more radical switch made him an apostle of Yeshua.' The argument has here turned full circle. Instead of Gamaliel, as traditional Christian interpretation has it, being the only Pharisee to support Yeshua's movement (despite one triumph of persuasion which was not repeated), now we have Paul as the isolated Pharisee- though in traditional Christian interpretation Saul was only following a typical Pharisee pattern when he persecuted the Nazarenes.** To be forced to turn the story on its head like this just shows that there is something radically wrong with the story as it stands; and to substitute one improbability for another - a uniquely persecuting Saul for a uniquely tolerant Gamaliel - is no solution. The only solution that makes perfect sense is that Saul was not a Pharisee, but persecuted the Christians for exactly the same reason that the High Priest persecuted them - because they were opposed to Roman domination of the Holy Land.

**Answer for yourself: Otherwise, what possible motive could a Pharisee have to persecute a group of people whom the entire body of Pharisees, headed by their revered leader, regarded as pious Jews, whose belief in Yeshua as Messiah might possibly be vindicated by time?**

**Answer for yourself: What kind of Jew, then, might have taken up this political police work in the service of the High Priest?**

**The police force of the High Priest was no doubt a motley crew, consisting partly of junior priests with an allegiance to the Sadducee party or belonging to those few families from whom the High Priest was traditionally selected, combined with foreign mercenaries of various kinds, including Jews or even non-Jews, who were relatively indifferent to Jewish patriotism and were prepared to endure the unpopularity which was the inevitable lot of those wielding power in the interests of a hated military occupation.**

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE EBIONITES…..WHY WAS I NEVER TOLD BEFORE NOW?

There exists an account of Saul's origins which was given by the Ebionites, the community of Jewish Christians, who regarded him as the perverter of Yeshua's message and as the founder of a new religion which Yeshua himself would have rejected. According to the Ebionites, Saul was not a Pharisee and not even a Jew by birth. His parents in Tarsus were Gentiles, and he himself had become a convert and had thereupon journeyed to the Holy Land, where he found employment in the service of the High Priest. **This is a very different story from that found in the New Testament, which has Saul as a prominent Pharisee, not so much entering the service of the High Priest as deigning to enter into an alliance with him.** The account given by the Ebionites has always been rejected contemptuously both by Christian writers and by some modern scholars as mere scurrilous polemics, intended to denigrate Paul, and based on nothing but spite and hostility. But the Ebionites deserve more consideration than this since they are the earliest Jewish followers

**of Yeshua and should know best the events that transpired in their time that involved Yeshua, their Messiah.**

**We must abandon the traditional contempt for the Ebionite account of Saul's origins and give it serious consideration.** **That Saul was a Pharisee is rendered most unlikely both by his persecution of the Nazarenes and by his association with the High Priest. But a person of foreign, non-Jewish extraction is just the kind of person that could be expected to enter the service of the High Priest and engage in police activities which a native-born Jew, resentful of Roman hegemony and of the Sadducean quisling regime, would regard with hostility and scorn. It would be natural for Paul, writing to communities for whom he was an inspired figure, to attribute to himself a more glamorous origin than was in fact the case and to explain his phase of serving in the High Priest's police force as actuated by religious zeal rather than by humdrum motives of earning a living by whatever unsavory means were open to an immigrant. The communities to whom Paul was writing were unaware of the politico-religious situation in Judaea, and might well think that the Pharisees and the early followers of Yeshua were at odds, and so not find it implausible that Paul's early opposition to the movement was actuated by Pharisaism. This explanation, first advanced by Paul himself in his letters (in which he did not even reveal that he was born in Tarsus, but carefully fostered the impression, without actually saying so, that he was a native-born Judaean) was afterwards incorporated by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.**

**Answer for yourself: But how can we even consider such a theory, when so many scholars have found incontrovertible evidence, as they think, of Paul's training as a Pharisee in his own writings?**

# JUST HOW SMART WAS PAUL....WAS HE REALLY TRAINED LIKE A RABBI?

**The style of argument and thought in the Epistles of Paul, we have been repeatedly told, is rabbinical; Paul, though putting forward views and arguments which 'go far beyond' rabbinical thinking, uses rabbinical logic and methods of biblical exegesis in such a way that his education as a Pharisee is manifest. Beloved as this view is by some scholars, it is entirely wrong, being based on ignorance or misunderstanding of rabbinical exegesis and logic. It will be necessary, therefore, to prove this point, before going on to deal with other objections to the view that the Ebionite account of Paul is nearer to the truth than the New Testament account.**

**It is to these issues we turn in the next article. Shalom.**

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# THE NON-JEWISH IDEAS OF PAUL...A PRESUMED PHARISEE OF PHARISEES...HOW CAN THIS BE?

**Before we continue our research into Paul and the problems connected with Paul as he is portrayed in the New Testament, I think it is beneficial to give a synopsis of what our research has confirmed.**

**The leading ideas of Paul's Epistles are far removed from Pharisaic Judaism. Paul's elevation of Yeshua to divine status was, for the Pharisees and for other Jews who believed the Jewish Bible, a reversion to paganism. Judaism had steadfastly refused to attribute divine status even to its greatest prophet, Moses, whose human failings are emphasized in scripture. Judaism had encountered a succession of human-divine figures throughout its history, from the deified Pharaohs of Egypt to the deified emperors of Greece and Rome, and had always found such worship to be associated with oppression and slavery. The Jews regarded their own anointed kings as mere human beings, whose actions were closely scrutinized and, if need be, criticized; so that the elevation of a Messiah ('anointed one') to divine status aroused in them not only their scorn of idolatry, but also deep political feelings of outrage at the usurpation of a position of power beyond the normal processes of criticism and constitutional opposition. While the Jews looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, they did not think that he would be a divine figure and thus beyond criticism; on the contrary, the Messiah would be accompanied by a prophet, who, like Elijah, would not hesitate to reprimand the anointed king if he failed in his duties or if he ignored the words of Deuteronomy "that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren" (Deuteronomy 17:20).**

**Paul's use of the term 'Christ' (the Greek term for the Hebrew 'Messiah') as a divine title has thus no precedent in Judaism, and would be felt by any Jew to be a complete departure from Jewish thinking about the Messiah. Further, the idea of 'being in Christ', which occurs frequently in Paul's letters, is entirely without parallel in Jewish literature, whether of the Pharisees or of any other sects. The concept of "being in a God" originated in Egypt. "Being in a God," in this case, means a kind of unity with, or sinking of the individuality into, the divine personality of Yeshua, and a sharing of his experience of crucifixion and resurrection as Paul speak about in Gal. 2:20. This is no different from the original concept of "being in Osiris" and "becoming Osiris" as taught in Egyptian Religion.**

***Gal 2:20 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (KJV)***

***Rom 6:3-6 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his***

***resurrection**: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (KJV)*

Notice that in these two concepts which Paul taught to Gentiles, and not Jews, that we have the whole ball of wax. This original concept comes from belief that when one dies he hopes to "become Osiris" and "become in him and he in them." I guess it is time that you you do serious study into Egyptian sun-worship in order to see these non-Jewish concepts for yourself!

**Apart from the implied elevation of Yeshua to divine status, this concept involves a relationship to the Divine that is alien to Judaism, in which the autonomy of the individual human personality is respected and guaranteed.** The idea of 'being in Christ', however, can be paralleled without difficulty in the religion of Egypt and the later mystery cults.

**Even more shocking to Jewish religious susceptibilities is** Paul's use of the term 'Lord' (Greek, *kurios)* as a title of the deified Yeshua. **This is the term used in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, to translate the Tetragrammaton or holy name of God Almighty (YHVH), Creator of Heaven and Earth.** To apply the name "**kurios**" or Lord in its **divine sense** to a human being who had recently lived and died on Earth would have seemed to any Pharisee or other Jew sheer blasphemy. However, to the recipients of Paul's letters, the use of the term "Lord" for Yeshua would not have seemed shocking at all, for this was the regular term for the deities of the mystery cults, those salvation gods with whom the devotees united their souls in communal dying and resurrection as just mentioned above. This presentation of Jesus in the writings of Paul amounts to the paganizing of Jesus for his Gentile audience to make not only him, the messenger, but the message more acceptable. Coupled with that one must realize that Paul was fresh from being rejected by the Sadducean High Priest and had not found the reception he expected from the Pharisees because of his prior harassment and imprisonment of many of them. Paul was desperately seeking "acceptance" in order to build a name for himself and this compromise whereby he moulded Jesus in the form of the already popular Gentile concepts of their gods and godmen was a stroke of genius for Paul. He simply would present Jesus in the fashion of the pagan godmen his audiences were already familiar, and since they were polytheistic, one more Godman would not be a problem. It was similar to "collecting baseball cards" if you catch my drift; one more won't hurt.

## THE PHARISEE PROBLEM AND PAUL JUST WON'T GO AWAY

The religious outlook of Paul's letters was thus shocking to Jews, but familiar to non-Jewish members of the Hellenistic culture. **Paul, though, must have known that, in applying such ideas to a person who had lived in a Jewish context, he was doing something new and shocking - indeed he explicitly says that he is aware of this.**

We must remember that a "scholar" knows "his stuff," but other scholars "know different stuff." What I mean is that no two people always know exactly what the other does. That is why there is so much knowledge to learn and life is a pilgrimage through this knowledge where different people are at different levels of learning. I, and other scholar familiar with what I write, don't always know everything about everything, but one thing is for sure, I sure know Christianity because I grew up as one and studied it intently for over 20 years. However, along the way I studied Judaism and a host of related disciplines. Things just did not add up and too much conflicting "beliefs" led to further analysis and study.

This being so explains why some scholars are not familiar with this information that I and others present. They simply have not seen it in their studies. This fact explains why some scholars have tried to solve the problem of Paul's adoption of utterly un-Jewish ideas in "his gospel" by seeking a

continuity between Judaism and Paul's ideas. Even those scholars, however, who have admitted an unbridgeable gulf between Paul's ideas and Judaism have insisted, nevertheless, that Paul began his religious life as a Pharisee, and we have seen that such is simply not true. You see many of them have not seen what you have seen since you read these few articles. **They are then faced with the problem of how Paul, assumed to be by them a trained and convinced Pharisee, was able to make such an extraordinary transition to ideas so far removed from Pharisaism.**

**Answer for yourself: How do they account for the un-Jewish ideas of Paul in his writings as applied to Jesus?**

**The solution is found in the nature of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus: this was no gradual development, but a shattering revelation in which all previous ideas and doctrines were swept away; consequently, there is no need to find continuity between Paul's Christology and his previous religious standpoint, which stood at an opposite pole. What these "scholars" want us to believe is that 4000 years of God leading and directing and preparing His people for their ultimate salvation and redemption thorough God's "anointed agent," the "one like unto Moses who was to come," was in a second totally wiped away and discarded and "plan B" was implemented and the only one who knew about this change of plans was one man...Saul the Sadducee! This is too impossible to believe!**

## *Isa 42:9 9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. (KJV)*

**Now listen up. God has promised to tell His people of the things He does before He does them simply in order that they and He can walk in unity. Now we are expected to believe that God is changing everything that He has spoken concerning His "salvation" as promised to his people through many messengers for thousands of years and He only tells one person out of nation of millions.**

**When God wanted to make things known, at Sinai for instance, He appeared on the mountain in sight of millions. God continually sent representative of Himself over and over with the "same message" as chronicled in the Prophets and sages in the history of Israel and their message was the "same" over and over again. Now, we are expected, according to the New Testament, that God is giving "one man," a Gentile convert who was a Sadducee until he fell out of their graces, with a supreme revelation that will alter and change everything that God has previously said and prepared his people for during the span of 4000 years. We are expected to believe that this God who "changes not" evidently scrapped everything He had done previously concerning His Messiah and how He had planned to ultimately redeem His people and in one second instituted "plan B" which was modeled after the Gentile's sun-worship and their solar-saviors and gave this "new plan B" not to again many messengers as had been His prior approach, but only to one man; a man who had been a murderer of God's people no less. Yet even this approach has to acknowledge that Paul, after his conversion and "special revelation of Jesus fashioned in the form of Gentile sun-godman, was still the same person as he was before and was not able to obliterate all traces of his upbringing and education. This education that he received while growing up in Tarsus, a city with few Jews and which is known to be the center for Mithra worship in Asia Minor, consisted of indoctrination in the pagan mystery religions. It is not surprising that this "revelation concerning Jesus" that is taught by Paul has so much in common with his prior training in the "mysteries." That explains dear ones why his revelation of Jesus is of a "mystical" and "cosmic" Jesus and not an earthly Jesus and also goes a long way to explain why Paul is not concerned with the human Jesus and his teachings or what he believed (only referenced only 2 teachings in 2 sentences that Jesus taught).**

# THE LITERARY STYLE OF PAUL IN HIS EPISTLES BETRAY THAT HE IS NOT A PHARISEE...

**Paul is touted to be a "Pharisee of Pharisees."**

**Answer for yourself: If that is really true than one should expect that Paul would be familiar with Rabbinical methods of hermeneutics or Biblical interpretation would we not?**

**Answer for yourself: What are some of these methods of Rabbinical interpretation of Jewish writings which all Rabbis and Pharisees held strict adherence to in analysis of the texts?**

**There are "Four" methods of interpretation of Biblical texts according to the teaching of the Jewish sages, there are four different ways in which any passage of Scripture may be understood. All four methods are said to be valid, and all four may produce somewhat different conclusions. This may seem confusing to those of us who have been educated in the culture of Western Civilization, where it is common to believe that communication can and should have only one meaning. This is not the case with the Hebrew mind set, where different meanings are not only accepted, but diligent searches are sometimes made to locate those differences. The four methods of interpretation are listed below, from the simplest to the most complex:**

**1) PASHAT is the literal or surface meaning of the text. All students of the Scriptures are expected to learn the "pashat" thoroughly before delving into the other meanings. Thus, a passage of Biblical history, such as the story of Joseph in Egypt, is to be understood in its simplest (literal) fashion before one begins to draw lessons from it. By the way, "pashat" is the `safest' method of interpreting the Scriptures.**

**2) REMEZ is sometimes called the `esoteric' meaning of the Scriptures. In other words, it is a meaning which is not apparent from the surface or "pashat" meaning. Often it involves the connecting of different Scriptures together, based upon key words or concepts. This is what commonly takes place when Bible students do word studies by searching out all of the uses of a word in Scripture in order to better understand its full meaning. However, this method can also be used to connect differing concepts concerning the same subject, such referring back to prior passages which shed light upon the passage under current study. Simply said this is "referring back to what has already been said" on the same topic or subject by different writers.**

**3) DRASH from which comes the Hebrew word Midrash, are the moral lessons to be learned from the various stories and parables found in Scripture. In Yeshua's day the Rabbis tended to be divided into two different types of teachers; those who taught the law, and those who taught moral lessons based on the law, through stories and examples. The former method was called HALACHA (the way one walk), while the latter was called AGGADAH. Yeshua was primarily an "aggadic" teacher, as witnessed by his many parables.**

**4) SOD is the deeper meaning of Scripture. It is often associated with the Kabbalistic teachings of medieval Jewish mysticism. "Sod" includes various methods of addressing Scripture text from a completely non-literal position. For example, Gematria is a common form of "sod." This is where a different meaning, of a word or passage, is derived based on the numerical values of the Hebrew letters. "Sod," in some of its forms, can be a dangerous form of study because it can lead the student down wrong paths of understanding. The `"New Age" form of Judaism falls into the category of "sod" study. By using these four different methods of interpretation, the Sages were able to understand that many of the Scriptures, which seemed to have been written in a very literal fashion, also contained layers of more profound meanings. As a result of this viewpoint, many orthodox Rabbis might say that all of the Hebrew Scriptures, right down to the letter level, teach in some way about the Messiah and how he is to come to redeem Israel and the world.**

**Most likely having grown up in church your whole lives, and hearing that Paul was a Pharisee, then it should be expected that Paul's writings will show strong traces of his Pharisee education: that Paul, though thinking quite differently from when he was a Pharisee, would have continued to use techniques of expression and argument characteristic of Pharisaism, and could not have done otherwise, any more than a person can obliterate his own fingerprints.**

**Answer for yourself: Do Paul's letters and epistles exhibit characteristics of these 4 levels of Rabbinical methods of interpretation and writing techniques? If it can be shown that they do not adhere to these 4 levels or Rabbinic hermeneutics then what can be said for them or their author concerning his Pharisaical background where**

**these techniques were to be mastered?**

**The facts of the matter speak for themselves. Paul's letters show un-Pharisaic ideas expressed in a Pharisaic style, a confirmation of the New Testament account of Paul's early life. This again is testimony to the fact, as the early testimony of the Ebionites attest, that Paul was a non-Jew who converted to Sadducean Judaism in order to purse a love interest for the High Priest's daughter.**

**Answer for yourself: Has any Christians noted this same fact as pointed out by the Jews themselves concerning Paul? Yes there has been some who have noticed the non-Pharisaical mode of Paul's thinking and writing.**

**Believe it or not, this is the testimony of the early church historian Epiphanius Against Heresies, chapter XXX, sec. 16. In this our own church historian comments on Paul's radical conversion. The alleged cause of Paul's sudden conversion and the transference of his hatred from Christianity to Judaism is questioned. The story of the apparition will not account for it. A genuine change of belief is not usually effected suddenly. Men sometimes change their religion for gain or revenge. It has been charged by our own Church Historian Epiphanius that Paul twice changed his religious affiliation, the first time for the hope of gain, and the second from a desire for revenge.**

***It has been charged by our own Church Historian Epiphanius that Paul twice changed his religious affiliation, the first time for the hope of gain, and the second from a desire for revenge.***

**Answer for yourself: What else does this "honest" Gentile Church Historian tell us about Paul?**

Epiphanius tells us that the Ebionites, one of the earliest of the Jewish Christian early sects, records for us that Paul was originally a Gentile, that becoming infatuated with the daughter of the High Priest he became a convert to Judaism for the purpose of winning her for a wife, but being rejected (not allowed to marry her), he renounced the Jewish faith and became a vehement opponent of the law, the Sabbath, and circumcision (Epiphanius Against Heresies, xxx, sec 16).

**Answer for yourself: Did you catch that? Did you notice that this was not a Jewish attack upon Paul but a Christian historian no less, one of our "boys," that tells us that! Now you know what kind of truths you can get from reading lots of early Church and Jewish history....you find the truth long buried for theological advantage by various parties.**

**Answer for yourself: Now did you make the connection that was made in earlier articles that Paul was originally a Sadducee and this fits well in the overall scheme of his ability to be close to the High Priest and surely would have been acquainted with his daughter, but being a converted Gentile "dog" was seen by the High Priest not good enough for his daughter. Paul was good enough to imprison and kill Messianic Pharisees for the High Priest but not good enough to marry his daughter (THINK).**

**I challenge you to listen to your own early church historians who give you a more clear picture of the times than what we have inherited today by the purging and re-writing of this period of history by the Roman Church. Now back to the article.**

**Though many Christian authors confidently assert that Paul's Epistles are full of Pharisaic expressions and arguments, few authors have made a serious attempt to substantiate this by giving examples. When they do (e.g. Schoeps or Klausner) it is quite startling to see how unconvincing they are. In fact, it may safely be said that if people had not already been convinced that Paul was a Pharisee (because of his own claim, and that made for him in Acts), no one would have thought of calling him a Pharisee or a person of 'rabbinic' cast of mind simply from a study of the Epistles. Instead of being a Pharisee writer, Paul**

**would have been regarded as a Hellenistic writer, deeply imbued with the Greek translation of the Bible, like Philo, but not familiar with the characteristic approach of the Pharisee rabbis.**

**If we free ourselves from the corrupted texts in the New Testament and the implanted assumption that Paul was a Pharisee, and up to now in the previous articles I have proven that, then we are not compelled to identify the style of Paul's Epistles with that of Pharisaism, and can allot them their due place in Hellenistic literature. The attempts by scholars, both Christian and Jewish, to find Pharisaic fingerprints in the Epistles can be dismissed as one of the whims of scholarship, which will always make the attempt to find in a text what is previously believed, for extraneous reasons, to be there, whether the text itself gives support to the enterprise or not. There is a term for this: eisegeis; where we read into a text what we already believe regardless if that concept is in the text or not.**

# LETS EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE….SHALL WE?

**Let us then examine some of the examples usually given, by those who bother to give examples at all, to show how Pharisaic Paul's mind was. We may begin with an example of exegetical logic that is fundamental to Pharisaic thought.**

## Qal va-homer

**One of the most important tools of Pharisaic reasoning was what was known as the qal va-homer argument. This is known in Western culture as the argument a fortiori, but it plays a far less important role in Western thinking, based on the logic of Aristotle, than it does in the thinking of the Pharisees and the Talmud. T**

**This is known in Western culture as the argument *a fortiori,* but it plays a far less important role in Western thinking, based on the logic of Aristotle, than it does in the thinking of the Pharisees and the Talmud. The *qal va-homer* (literally, 'light and heavy') goes like this: if something is known about one thing which has a certain quality in a relatively 'light' form, then it must be true 'all the more so' of some other thing that has the same quality in a relatively 'heavy' form.**

**A typical example is found in the Bible: where the Lord says to Moses, after Miriam has offended by her criticisms and has been punished with leprosy, and Moses prays that she may be healed: "If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again" (Numbers 12:14). This example is actually cited in the rabbinical writings as a paradigm for a reason that will prove important in our argument about Paul. The argument may be paraphrased as follows: if offending a father (a relatively light thing) is punished with banishment for seven days, offending God (a relatively heavy thing) should all the more receive such a punishment and therefore Miriam should not be forgiven immediately.**

**To give a more easily comprehensible example from modern life: if a person should not drive a car after drinking a given quantity of beer, then all the more should he not drive after drinking the same quantity of whiskey.**

**Now Paul, in his Epistles, is quite fond of using the *a fortiori* argument, and this has been regarded, by some, as incontrovertible proof of his Pharisee training, which gave him a taste for arguing in this way even when he was arguing for a doctrine of which the Pharisees would have disapproved strongly.**

**Answer for yourself: But is this a correct assessment? No. Let us continue and show you why.**

## Examples of Paul's use of the *qal va-homer* are the following:

- ***For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, much more,***

***now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5: 10)***

- ***For if by the wrongdoing of that one man death established its reign, through a single sinner, much more shall those who receive in far greater measure God's grace, and his gift of righteousness, live and reign through the one man, Yeshua Christ. (Romans 5: 17)***
- ***For if their rejection has meant the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean? Nothing less than life from the dead! (Romans 11: 15)***
- ***For if you were cut from your native wild olive and against all nature grafted into the cultivated olive, how much more readily will they, the natural olive branches, be grafted into their native stock! (Romans 11:24)***

**Answer for yourself: Out of the above 4 examples cited by some of Paul's rabbinical writing style, how many truly can be classified as *qal va-homer*? Only 3.**

**Out of these four *qal va-homer* arguments in Romans, three are invalid arguments by the canons of Pharisee logic, for it is a basic principle of that logic that in a *qal va-homer* argument, the conclusion cannot validly go beyond what is contained in the premise. This is known as the principle of dayo.**

**To explain this principle, we may return to our first example, the biblical argument used about Miriam. It would be invalid, in Pharisee logic, to argue as follows: if offending a father deserves seven days banishment, then offending God deserves fourteen days banishment. Such an argument has no precision about it, for how do we know how much to add to the data given in the premise in order to arrive at the conclusion? The only precise form of the argument is this: if offending a father deserves seven days banishment, then all the more so does offending God deserve seven days banishment. This is the form of the argument actually found in the Bible, as the Pharisees pointed out to support their analysis.**

**In the four arguments quoted from Romans above, only the fourth one conforms to the correct pattern of a *qal va-homer* argument, the others going far beyond the conclusion warranted by their premise.**

**If one looks to these examples listed above from the pen of Paul one must conclude that Paul had no idea of the conditions of validity of this a qal-va-homes of argument; one correct argument out of four shows only a random success. This is evidence against Paul being a Pharisee and not conducive to support such a contention.**

# QAL VA-HOMER AS AN ANALOGY

**The qal va-homer argument is a Jewish form of analogy, and in Greek logic the analogy was never regarded as capable of logical form or precision. Hellenistic writers, on the other hand, often used *afortiori* reasoning, but only in a loose, rhetorical way, without regard for precision or formal validity. This is just the way that Paul uses such arguments, and this stamps him as someone who has never received a Pharisee's training. A trained Pharisee could never forget his education to such an extent as to produce fuzzy, imprecise reasoning in a field where the Pharisees prided themselves on their precision. Paul's use of *afortiori arguments* has often been cited to show that he was a Pharisee by education, but in fact this attempted proof rebounds on itself.**

**Nothing could display more clearly Paul's lack of Pharisee scholarship than his use of the *afortiori* argument, which he employs in a rhetorical style that can be paralleled from the popular Stoic preachers of the Hellenistic world. But understand this is not how Rabbis were taught to teach or write....this is not a Jewish mode of writing or teaching; such betrays Paul's lack of Pharisee training and brings in doubt that he ever studied with Gamaliel.**

***For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5: 10)***

Remembering that qal va-homer is an argument in a Jewish form like an analogy, a Pharisee would **not** contrast "being an enemy with God" with "being saved by his life" when coupled with the effects of the death of his Son. If this were a true qal va-homer "saved by his life" would have to parallel the same theme as "enemy of God." It does not, thus betraying that this is not an instance of qal va-homer.

***For if by the wrongdoing of that one man death established its reign, through a single sinner, much more shall those who receive in far greater measure God's grace, and his gift of righteousness, live and reign through the one man, Yeshua Christ. (Romans 5: 17)***

Again we see the "wrongdoing of one man that brought death" cannot be paralleled with "grace of God that is a gift of righteousness". Again this is not an example of qal va-homer.

***For if their rejection has meant the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean? Nothing less than life from the dead! (Romans 11: 15)***

Lastly, "rejection" cannot be paralleled with "acceptance" and qualify as a qal va-homer.

The above examples are strong evidence to the contrary and weakens the position that Paul was writing like Pharisees and Rabbis. This information, which is of a somewhat technical nature, is especially important for us since we are instructed in the New Testament that Paul was trained by Gamaliel. Paul's used of Rabbinical techniques of "writing" and "thinking" betray his lack of understanding and training in Rabbinical methods of hermeneutics. To suggest, as did the writer of Luke, that Paul was trained under Gamaliel is a discredit to Gamaliel for evidently he was a poor teacher because Paul, if he were a pupil, learned absolutely nothing. He must have gotten an "F" in Gamaliel's class. In reality to suggest that Paul was even a student of Gamaliel is preposterous because his writings betray he knows little if anything about Rabbinical hermeneutics and writing. Nothing could be farther from the truth that Paul, a Gentile convert, being a student of the highly respected Gamaliel.

# CAN PAUL USE JEWISH MIDRASH CORRECTLY?

**Well we just say how Paul cannot use the simple technique of Qal-va-homer (Jewish analogy).**

Now let us turn to see how Paul, a supposed Pharisee of Pharisees, uses Jewish midrash or biblical exegesis to reinforce his arguments. Maybe we can find evidence of Rabbinical training in this. **An example often cited by Christian writers to show Paul's rabbinical style is the following: "Christ bought us freedom from the curse of the law by becoming for our sake an accursed thing; for Scripture says, 'A curse is on everyone who is hanged on a tree'" (Galatians 3:13).**

**Answer for yourself: Is the above statement in Galatians 3:13 true?**

**Here Paul offers a verse from Deuteronomy in order to explain how great the sacrifice of Yeshua was: he voluntarily took upon himself a curse by the manner of his death so that mankind would be freed from the curse of sin. Traditional Christianity uses this verse as a foundational stone to their religious belief system.**

**It has been assumed by most scholars that Paul's interpretation of the verse in Deuteronomy (i.e. that anyone hanged on a tree is under a curse) was part of contemporary Pharisee exegesis of that verse, and that consequently Paul took his basis for argument from the Pharisee stock, though he developed it in his own way. This, however, is an serious error.**

**The idea that anyone hanged on a tree is under a curse was entirely alien to Pharisee thought, and the Pharisee teachers did not interpret the verse in Deuteronomy in this way. Many highly respected members of the Pharisee movement were crucified by the Romans, just like Yeshua, and, far from being regarded as under a curse because of the manner of their death, they were regarded as martyrs. The idea that an innocent man would incur a curse from God just because he had been unfortunate enough to die an agonizing death on the cross was never part of Pharisee thinking, and only a deep contempt for the Judaism of the Pharisees has led so many scholars to assume that it was. The Pharisees never thought that God was either stupid or unjust, and He would have to be both to put a curse on an innocent victim.**

**Even if the hanged person was guilty of a capital crime, he was not regarded as being under a curse, but, on the contrary, as having expiated and atoned for his crime by undergoing execution. The verse in question (Deuteronomy 21:23) was interpreted by the rabbis as follows: an executed criminal's corpse was to be suspended on a pole for a short period, but the corpse (his body which was created in the image of God) must then be taken down and not left to hang overnight, for to do this (to leave hanging overnight) would incur a curse from God; in other words, the curse was placed NOT on the executed person, but on the people responsible for subjecting the corpse to indignity by leaving in the corpse exposed in such an undignified manner overnight). One interpretation was that it is cursing God, or blasphemy, to allow the corpse of an executed criminal to hang overnight, for the human body was made in the image of God.**

**The New English Bible translates the verse, "When a man is convicted of a capital offense and is put to death, you shall hang him on a tree; but his body shall not remain on the tree overnight; you shall bury it on the same day, for a hanged man is offensive in the sight of God." This is in accordance with the Pharisee interpretation of the passage, which was a correct reflection of the meaning of the original Hebrew.**

**Answer for yourself: Should we blame the Holy Spirit for inspiring Paul to write this write and record this passage from Deuteronomy so incorrectly and get the true meaning of the passage absolutely backwards? Paul's inability to understand this passage and to convey it correctly does not say much for Gamaliel's training nor for Paul's ability to comprehend the Jewish faith. When one considers that Paul was an adult convert to Judaism as attested in the Ebionite letter and that most likely he never attended one lecture of Gamaliel then much of these errors and problems of Paul are easily explained.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul not know any better his own Jewish Scriptures and could this explain why he cannot relate, quote, or interpret correctly the Jewish Scriptures?**

**Answer for yourself: Or does this once again show the thinking believer that Paul was not well familiar with the Jewish Scriptures which again is evidence of his Gentile background and conversion to a faith which was new for him?**

**Paul's interpretation was thus not taken from any Pharisee source, but was his own personal reaction to the rather ambiguous translation given in the Greek Septuagint. Far from providing an example of Pharisee *midrash,* Paul shows himself in this passage in Galatians to be far removed from the spirit of the *midrashic* interpretations common to all Pharisees.**

**Vague concepts, such as being under a posthumous curse because of the baleful magical effect of the manner of one's death (died on a cross), belongs to Gentile paganism, not to Judaism, much less Pharisaic Judaism, which regarded the manner of one's life as the decisive means of obtaining the favor or God or incurring the displeasure of God. Judaism teaches, and always has, that it is not the manner of one's death that displeases God, especially when the the method of one's death was not under one's control. God is concerned with how we live and not how we die. Again this theology as**

espoused in many of Pauline epistles is evidence of the influence of Paul's Gentile background before converting to Judaism and his lack of Rabbinical training. It might be said by Paul's friends that he studied under Gamaliel (Luke in Acts) but Paul never said he did and without a doubt Paul's writings show beyond a doubt that he does not "think" like a Rabbinical Pharisee not writes like one.

As for the idea that Yeshua removed a curse from other people by taking a curse upon himself, this too is alien to Jewish thinking, **but this, of course, belongs to Paul's central theology, not to his style of argument, and will dealt with later in future articles.**

**Answer for yourself: So why have we misunderstood Paul by his depiction in the New Testament and have come to believe him to be a Pharisee among Pharisees when the truth of matter is that nothing could be further from the truth. Such is the fruit of reediting of the New Testament by anti-Semitic agendas and millions read and believe these lies never knowing them to be so.**

## SIMPLY….WE AS CHRISTIANS DON'T KNOW BIBLICAL JUDAISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT…THE FAITH AND BIBLE JESUS USED...THUS WE ARE GULLIBLE AND ACCEPT LIES AS TRUTH....NEVER KNOWING THE DIFFERENCE

For the most part we are "New Testament" Christians and not "Old Testament" Christians. If we had been taught the Old Testament before the New Testament then we would have easily seen when and how the "theological train" jumps the track in the New Testament. When all is said and done it comes down to this; namely, it is our unfamiliarity with Biblical Judaism and a Jewish Jesus that is the reason we have fallen for the multitude of deceptions in the New Testament.

***Matt 24:24 24 For there shall arise false Christs (anointed ones), and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (KJV)***

Many supposedly "anointed ones" with revelations from God have come in the name of God with "this" and "that" special revelation and in the end all that they have done is deceive the "elect" and the children of God. Paul is just one in a long line of them. You are beginning to see this as we look at Paul's inability to interpret the Jewish passages correctly let alone to think and write in traditional Jewish Rabbinical methods. **Some passages in Paul's Epistles have been thought to be typically Pharisaic simply because their argument has a legalistic air. When these passages are critically examined, however, the superficiality of the legal coloring soon appears, and it is apparent that the use of illustrations from law is merely a vague, rhetorical device, without any real legal precision, such as is found in the Pharisaic writings even when the legal style is used for homiletic biblical exegesis.**

## CAN PAUL KEEP A CLEAR THOUGHT AND SHOULD WE TRUST HIS REASONING FOR FAITH AND PRACTICE? READ THIS AND YOU BE THE JUDGE...IF I WERE PAUL..I WOULD BE ASHAMED

**Christians for centuries have considered the Book of Romans the zenith of the literary expressions of Paul. Let us examine the following passages and inspect it for traces of Rabbinical training or the absence of it:**

***You cannot be unaware, my friends - I am speaking to those who have some knowledge of law - that a person is subject to the law so long as he is alive, and no longer. For example, a married woman is by law bound to her husband while he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the obligations of the marriage-law. If, therefore, in her husband's lifetime she consorts with another man, she will incur the charge of adultery; but if her husband dies she is free of the law, and she does not commit adultery by consorting with another man. So you, my friends, have died to the law by becoming identified with the body of Christ, and accordingly you have found another husband in him who rose from the dead, so that we may bear fruit for God. While we lived on the level of our lower nature, the sinful passions evoked by the law worked in our bodies, to bear fruit for death. But now, having died to that which held us bound, we are discharged from the law, to serve God in a new way, the way of the spirit, in contrast to the old way, the way of a written code. (Romans 7: 1-6).***

**Answer for yourself: Did the Holy Spirit inspire Paul to write anything, let alone this passage? Let us investigate.**

**It will surprise you, especially in light of all the sermons you have heard preached on this where you have been taught that the symbolism employed by Paul is to convey that the Old Covenant familiar to Jesus has been passed away away and replaced by another....the New Covenant. What you will find when you slowly analyze the passage is that the above passage is remarkably muddle-headed. Paul is trying to compare the abrogation of the Torah and the advent of the new covenant of Christianity with a second marriage contracted by a widow. He is saying that the "first marriage" of God with His people at Sinai is now replaced with a "second marriage" with Gentile Christianity.**

**What I am about to show you is the inability of Paul to keep his thoughts straight in the following comparisons. What you will see will be astounding and will absolutely take your breath away when you realize the haphazard juxtaposition of concepts and ideas which on the surface you have taken for granted most of our lives. We will see that Paul is unable to keep clearly in his mind "who" it is that corresponds to the "wife" and "who" corresponds to the "husband" - or even "who is supposed to have died, the husband or the wife."**

**The passage in Romans 7:1-6, which reflects Paul's religious beliefs, is intended to to convey the following ideas:**

- **the wife is the Church**
- **the former husband is the Torah**
- **the new husband is Christ**

**Now pay close attention. Paul tells us that a wife is released by the death of her husband to marry a new husband. There is no problem yet. Based on this idea of Paul and his "special revelation" the passage should read, therefore, in the comparison, that the Church was freed, by the death of the Torah, to marry Christ.**

**Instead, if you follow the messed up Pauline reasoning, it is the wife-Church that dies ('you, my friends, have died to the law by becoming identified with the body of Christ') and there is even some play with the idea that the new husband, Christ, has died.**

**Answer for yourself: Is such confusion indicative that Paul was a learned Rabbi and Pharisee and a master of reason which was a staple of Pharisee exegesis? Not at all.**

***Paul's lack of Pharisee training, understanding of Rabbinical methods of teaching and writing, and his overall lack of expertise in handling the simple***

## *understandings of the Jewish Scriptures (curse/tree for example) overwhelming demonstrates for us that the NT characterization of Paul as a Pharisee of Pharisees is untrue*

The only term in the comparison from Romans 7 that is not mentioned as having "died" is the Torah; yet this is the only thing that would make the comparison valid and Paul missed it!

**On the other hand, there is also present in the Romans 7 passage an entirely different idea: that a person becomes free of legal obligations after his or her *own* death. This indeed seems to be the theme first announced: "that a person is subject to the law so long as he is alive, and no longer." The theme of the widow being free to marry after the death of her first husband is quite incompatible with this;** yet Paul confuses the two themes throughout - so much so that at one point he even seems to be talking about a widow and a husband who are free to marry each other and have acceptable children because both widow and new husband are dead. (THINK)! Confusion cannot be worse confounded than this.

## *Dearly beloved... this is the man to whom Gentile Christianity has trusted for their salvation message…one who cannot keep a clear thought, cannot understand the simplest Jewish Scriptures, and who demonstrates repeatedly in the NT his inability to think and write in a Rabbinical manner...who cannot understand and use Rabbinical methods of teaching and interpretation, and who was a Sadducee...a bitter enemy of Jesus and all that he stood for....! Incredible!!!!!!*

Thus what we have here is a case of someone trying to construct a legal analogy and failing miserably because of his inability to think in the logical manner one expects of a legal expert like the Rabbis and Pharisees. The passage thus does not prove that Paul had Pharisee training, but just the contrary. **What we can say, however, is that Paul is here trying to sound like a trained Pharisee...which multiple evidence prove he was not!** To those who know better the deception is easily apparent. To those who don't know of these things the deceptions is not so easily seen. It is we who grew up in Gentile churches who do not know Hebrew, who are unfamiliar with the truth about Pharisees, their literature and ways of writing, their methods of interpretation, the reediting of the New Testament, and the Pauline alteration of the Jewish Messianic idea, who find ourselves misled...and we never know it...that is until we die and God informs us of our sin and our mistakes.

## HAVE WE BEEN DECEIVED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT RECORD OF PAUL?

Let us never forget Paul was writing to non-Jews, Gentiles, like you and me, who did not know or understand the Pharisees or the diligence necessary to be a master of Holy Scripture. Little has changed when reading Paul by the contemporary Christian Church. Basically the Protestant church has followed in the legacy of its mother (the Catholic Church) and failed to understand Biblical Judaism. That being the case we are relegated to reading the NT as if it is "correct" and without the knowledge that comes from Biblical Judaism we are unequipped to discern and notice the many lies

and deceptions within this book; many of which are of Pauline creation which when preached today receive "amens" instead of being exposed as lies and untruths.

**Paul goes on in this Romans 7 passage to announce in a somewhat portentous way that what he is going to say will be understood only by those who "have some knowledge of law" and he is clearly intending to display legal expertise.** It is only natural that Paul, having claimed so often to have been trained as a Pharisee, should occasionally attempt to play the part, especially when speaking or writing for the Gentile peoples of the world who would not be able to detect any shortcomings in his performance due to their unfamiliarity with Biblical Judaism (just like the Christian Churches today). When all is said and done , Paul has produced a ludicrous travesty of Pharisee thinking. In the whole of Pharisee literature, there is nothing to parallel such an exhibition of lame reasoning.

**What Paul is saying, in a general way, is that death dissolves legal ties. Therefore, the death of Yeshua and the symbolic death of members of the Church by identifying themselves with Yeshua's death all contribute to a loosening of ties with the old covenant. This general theme is clear enough; it is only when Paul tries to work out a kind of legal conceit or parable, based on the law of marriage and remarriage, that he ties himself in knots.** Thus Paul loses effectiveness just where a Pharisee training, if he had ever had one, would have asserted itself; once more, he is shown to have the rhetorical style of the Hellenistic preachers of popular Stoicism, not the terse logic of the Pharisees and the rabbis.

## PAUL'S STYLE BETRAYS HIM….WHY IS HE THE ONLY "PHARISEE" TO EVER QUOTE THE HEATHEN?

**This brings us back to the most obvious thing about Paul's writings, from a stylistic viewpoint, that they are written in Greek. Obvious as it is, this fact often seems to be ignored by those laboring to prove that Paul wrote and thought like a rabbi. Paul's Greek is that of one who is a native speaker of the language. It is not, of course, classical Greek or even literary Greek, but the living spoken language (known as koine) of the time, in both vocabulary and rhythm. He is so naturally at home in the Hellenistic world that he even quotes Menander at one point and a contemporary tragic poet at another.** No such writing exists from the pen of any rabbi of the Pharisee movement who quotes pagan writers, so if Paul was a Pharisee, he was unique in this regard.

## HOW WELL DID PAUL KNOW HEBREW…IF AT ALL?

**The question arises whether Paul even had sufficient grasp of the Hebrew language to have engaged in studies at a Pharisee academy. We know that he could speak Aramaic (Acts 21:40), but this did not require any study on his part, for that language was spoken as the common vernacular in his home city of Tarsus, where Greek was the language of commerce and government.** But Hebrew is a different matter. This was the language of scholarship, both in its classical form as found in the Hebrew Bible and in its neo-Hebrew form as found in the Mishnah. The study of the Bible in the original Hebrew was the basis for all Pharisee studies. **A knowledge of the Hebrew of the Bible was relatively rare in Paul's time, as is shown by the existence of the Targum, the translation of the Bible into Aramaic that was made for the benefit of the ordinary Jews who could not understand the Bible in Hebrew.**

The indications from Paul's writings are that he knew very little Hebrew. His quotations from the Bible (which number about 160) are from the Greek translation, the Septuagint, not from the original Hebrew. **It is not my intent to discuss it here, but not only did Paul not quote from the Hebrew Bible, but the vast majority of his quotations are misquotations of the original text and the intended meaning of the original author (http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com).** Not only that but Paul often quotes in the New Testament a passage which cannot be found in any Jewish literature to date. **One must wonder if Paul made some stuff up. This charge against Paul of "creative literary invention" is true but another answer is that**

**often he is writing and quoting from liturgies and rituals from various types of Gentile paganisms that find their origin in sun-worship (http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com). If you diligently study and cover the above websites you will be amazed to see how much mistranslations and misquotations of the Jewish Scriptures, as used by Paul in the New Testament (instead of the true and correct passages as taken from the Jewish Masoretic text) have played in creating a new religion called Gentile Christianity today. Ask and we will see you get the information. But back to our main point. As stated above, Paul quoted continuously from the Greek translation of Old Testament Scriptures and not the Hebrew Bible. This is shown by the fact that wherever the text of the Hebrew Bible differs from that of the Greek, Paul always quotes the text found in the Greek, not that found in the Hebrew.**

**Answer for yourself: Why does the text of the Greek translation differ from the Hebrew Bile in the first place in so many special "messianic positions"?**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul was as a Pharisee of the Pharisees and familiar with the Tanakh and as learned as we are led to believe by the New Testament they would he not know that the source he was quoting from (the Greek Old Testament) was full of purposeful mistranslations and misquotations when compared to the original Hebrew?**

**Answer for yourself: Since the Rabbis and Pharisees in Palestine did not use this corrupted Greek translation of their Jewish Scriptures then why does Paul, a Pharisee of Pharisees, uses only this?**

**Answer for yourself: You should ask yourself an even more troubling question, if that is possible: Given that Paul, a Pharisee of Pharisees, was aware that the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible contained mistranslations and misquotations, why did Paul knowingly use a flawed translation for his quotes when writing his epistles?**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul not concerned for truth or was his rejection by the Sadducees and Pharisees constraining him to build himself a following and reputation in a "sour grapes" response to those in Jerusalem that rejected him? And did Paul see that the shortest way to build such a ministry is preaching "Jesus" in the same theology that his audiences already believed about their other Godmen which they arrived at from sun-worship?**

**Answer for yourself: Did the Gentile's unfamiliarity with the Jewish Scriptures matter to Paul, and would such Biblical ignorance on the part of the non-Jew aid Paul in the presentation of his agenda and his compromised "gospel message" regardless that the Jewish Scriptures would not support such belief?**

**Answer for yourself: Was truth not important to Paul, and was he more concerned at validating his personal authority and apostleship and building up a following among the Gentiles to promote himself, especially in light of his rejection by the High Priest and the Jerusalem church? These are tough questions that have tough historical answers.**

# LOOKING AT ONE OF PAUL'S QUOTES

**For example, there is the famous Pauline quotation as found in I Corinthians 15:55:**

***"O death, where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting?"***

**This comes from the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures called the Septuagint, in particular from Hosea 13:14.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the Hebrew text has a different reading entirely?**

**The Hebrew of Hosea 13:14 as taken from the Stone Edition of the Tanakh:**

*'Oh for your plagues, O death! Oh for your sting, O grave!'*

**It is most unlikely that any Pharisee would adopt a policy of quoting from the Septuagint rather than from the Hebrew Bible, which was regarded as the only truly canonical version by the Pharisee movement.**

# THE INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION FOR THE THINKING BELIEVER

**Thus there is nothing in Paul's writings to prove that he was a Pharisee, and much to prove that he was not. Great play has been made with certain references to legendary material in Paul's letters; it is claimed that this must have come from a Pharisaic source, but in fact this material was widely known throughout the Jewish world including the Greek-speaking Jewish areas of the Diaspora, and proves nothing. For example, Paul refers at one point to a legend about the miraculous well that followed the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness (I Corinthians l0:4). But this legend was by no means confined to the Pharisaic movement, being found in the compilation known as *Biblical Antiquities* (or Pseudo-Philo) which is extant now only in a Latin translation, but is known to have existed in a Greek version in the first century. Paul could quite easily have come across this legend in a Greek book or even more probably from common conversation with the unlearned, just as a child today may be acquainted with one of Aesop's fables without having studied the Greek classics.**

***If you have followed this article closely, then you must conclude, therefore, that the allegedly profound Pharisaic style and atmosphere of Paul's writings, which the New Testament writers insinuate, is itself a purposeful misrepresentation of the facts and an outright lie.***

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# UNDERSTANDING THE DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE OF PAUL & HIS SPIRITUAL DILEMMA

**Answer for yourself: What was the big events which signaled the beginning of the Christian religion?**

You might not be aware of this but the "big event" that provided the origin for Christianity was the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus. It was through this event that Jesus' movement (Messianic Biblical Judaism) changed from being a variety of Judaism into a new religion with a theology and religious belief system distinct from those of Judaism. This outcome was not immediate, even in the mind of Paul himself. But it was the Damascus event that provided the germ of all the later developments and these developments can be traced through the "evolution" of Paul's religious concepts throughout his life as chronicled in the New Testament.

**Paul (at this stage, still called Saul) was on his way to Damascus on a mission described as follows:**

***Acts 9:1-2 1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. (KJV)***

## WHAT ARE THE HIDDEN PROBLEMS IN ACTS 9:2?

**Most likely you have read this passage hundreds of times in your life and never saw anything out of the ordinary that might provoke any idea of a "problem" in this passage. But believe me with a little knowledge of Judaism then this passage from Acts 9:2 presents several problems. The High Priest had no authority over synagogues as such, for his jurisdiction in Jewish law extended only over the Temple in Jerusalem. The synagogues, which were set up for prayer and study wherever there was a population of Jews, both inside and outside the Holy Land, did not form part of the Temple organization, but were under lay supervision and authority, as they are to this day. The priests or kohanim (the descendants of Aaron) were given certain honors in the synagogue service, such as being called up first to the reading of the law and pronouncing the priest's blessing on festival days, but they had no role of leadership in the synagogue community. The lay administrators of the synagogue were elected by its members, and the spiritual guidance of the community was in the hands of a rabbi, at this time not a paid office. The High Priest, therefore, had no right to send his officers into the synagogues to arrest people whose activities he disapproved of. Nevertheless, within Judaea the High Priest was able to do this, not by religious right, but simply by virtue of the power assigned to him by the Roman occupying forces. It was as chief of police, not as a figure of religious standing, that the High Priest was able to send officers such as Saul into synagogues to arrest members of Jesus' movement and haul them off to prison. As we have seen, he did this, not**

because he disapproved of their theology, but because he regarded them as a menace to the Roman occupation and desired to forestall or prevent any Messianic uprising that might bring upon them the wrath of Rome for such political unrest.

Outside Judaea, however, the High Priest had no such police authority, and it is therefore difficult to understand how any "letters" he might give to Saul "authorizing him to arrest" followers of Jesus would have any validity. The difficulty is all the greater in that Damascus at this time was not even under Roman rule, having been ceded by Caligula (AD 37). **It belonged to the independent Arab kingdom of Nabataea, under the rule of King Aretas iv (9BC-AD 40). This King, who was jealous of his independence, would hardly take kindly to the entry into his territory of an emissary of the Roman-ruled area of Judaea for the purpose of arresting and dragging away citizens or even aliens who were under his protection.**

It seems, then, that the details of Saul's allotted task in Damascus does not line up with the facts. **It cannot be that he had letters from the High Priest authorizing him to arrest indiscriminately members of Jesus' movement in Damascus. On the contrary, it was precisely in order to escape from the jurisdiction of the High Priest and of the Romans that Jesus' followers had left Judaea and gone to Damascus. This being the case Saul must have been on a clandestine mission to kidnap certain leading Nazarenes and bring them back to Judaea for imprisonment or for handing over to the Roman authorities. As we have seen, one wing of Jesus' movement, of which Stephen had been a leader, was adopting an activist line against the Roman occupation, and had been forced into exile (while the quietist wing, which was waiting for the triumphant return of Jesus himself, was allowed to remain unmolested). No doubt some activists still remained in Judaea underground, and were receiving help and advice from their comrades in Damascus, who were proving a thorn in the flesh of the High Priest.** Saul, the trusted police officer of the High Priest, was therefore sent with a band of mercenaries to put an end to this menace by illegally entering Damascus and carrying off the ringleaders of subversion.

# EXTRA-BIBLICAL EVIDENCE THAT SHOWS THE ACTS 9 ACCOUNT IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT

**A verification of this Acts 9 incident of Paul exists and has survived in later Christian literature. In the pseudo-Clementine Recognitions (i. 70 if.), a work known to contain some material taken from Jewish Christian literature, we are told that when Saul travelled to Damascus it was with the intention of arresting no other than Peter, who had fled there after a persecution involving the near-murder of James. While this account cannot be reconciled with the statement of Acts that the leading apostles were not being molested at this time, it may well be a garbled version of genuine historical fact, which was that leading members of Stephen's faction were in Damascus, and Saul was in pursuit of them.**

**An interesting confirmation of this version of events can be found in Paul's own writings. In 2 Corinthians 11: 32-33, he writes:**

***"When I was in Damascus, the commissioner of King Aretas kept the city under observation so as to have me arrested; and I was let down in a basket, through a window in the wall, and so escaped his clutches."***

**This refers to the period after Paul had entered Damascus, having been struck blind by his vision of Jesus, cured by Ananias and become a public advocate ofJesus. But the account of the same event in Acts presents a surprising contrast:**

***But Saul grew more and more forceful, and silenced the Jews of Damascus with his cogent proofs that Jesus was the Messiah. As the days mounted up, the Jews hatched a plot against his life; but their plans became known to Saul. They kept watch on the city gates day and night so that they might***

***murder him; but his converts took him one night and let him down by the wall, lowering him in a basket. (Acts g: 22-25)***

**Paul's version is, of course, much closer to the actual events (Paul was writing his letters from about AD 55 to about AD 60, while Acts was not written until about AD 90). And Paul tells us that the reason why he had to steal secretly away from Damascus was that the police chief of King Aretas was seeking to arrest him. In Acts, however, it is said that Paul's life was threatened by the Jewish residents of Damascus, who objected to Paul's advocacy of the Messiahship ofJesus. This is a most instructive contrast. It is a perfect example of how the shift, found throughout the Gospels and Acts, from a political to a religious account of events results in vilification of the Jews as the villains of the story.**

**If it was the "commissioner of King Aretas" who was seeking to arrest Paul, and not the Jews, Paul must have been thought guilty of some political offence. Some scholars have tried to argue that the commissioner was acting on behalf of the Jews; but there was no reason for the Nabataean chief of police to concern himself with religious disputes among the Jewish residents of Damascus. Much more likely is that he had discovered that Paul was himself a police agent of the High Priest of Jerusalem and that he was in Damascus on a mission that constituted an infringement of Nabataean sovereignty. The situation must have been quite a common one in Damascus, which was a refuge for political dissidents fleeing areas under Roman authority. The fact that Paul had given up the mission on which he had been sent would not have been believed by the commissioner, who would regard Paul's conversion merely as a front for an undercover agent. The commissioner would therefore have acted promptly on information received about Paul's status, and Paul had to beat a hasty retreat from Damascus to avoid arrest.**

**The Jews of Damascus would not have had anything against Paul just because he had been converted to the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Belief in a Messiah or a particular identity for this "soon coming King" was varied in Israel in the first century and was not a matter of contention. Paul, at this early period of his conversion, had not yet formulated his new and heretical views about the divine status of Jesus and the abrogation of the Torah, so he would be regarded as simply another follower of Jesus; and the Nazarenes in Damascus would be regarded with sympathy by all Jews as a patriotic party working for the liberation of the Jewish homeland. But there would be no Jews in Damascus who would sympathize with the collaborationist views of the High Priest, for there would be no pro-Roman party among Jews living in a city that had been removed from Roman rule.**

**The book of Acts, however, having transformed Saul from a police agent into a fanatical Pharisee, has to represent his mission to Damascus as religious, not political, and consequently, when Saul becomes converted to Jesus' movement, the Jews of Damascus become the cruel, intolerant Pharisees who oppose him, just as in the Gospels the Pharisees are set up as the opponents of Jesus. The clear evidence of tampering with the facts, shown by the changing of the story from Paul's account of what happened to that given in Acts, should alert us to a similar process wherever the Jews are portrayed as persecutors.**

# PAUL'S CONVERSION EXPERIENCE...3 ACCOUNTS...3 DIFFERENT VERSIONS...WHY?

**It is time to focus on the experience of Paul near Damascus that changed his life and that of the Western world. There are three accounts of this event in the book of Acts (in chapters 9, 22 and 26), and there are some curious inconsistencies between the three accounts; also there is a fourth account in the first chapter of Galatians, written by Paul himself, that raises problems of its own. We may begin with the first account (Acts 9:1-31):**

**"While he was still on the road and nearing Damascus, suddenly a light flashed from the sky all around him. He**

**fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' 'Tell me, Lord,' he said, 'who you are.' The voice answered, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you have to do.' Meanwhile the men who were travelling with him stood speechless; they heard the voice and could see no one. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could not see; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. He was blind for three days, and took no food or drink."**

**According to this account, Saul's vision is characterized by certain manifestations:**

- **Its suddenness;**
- **The presence of a great light;**
- **The hearing of a voice declaring itself to be that of Jesus;**
- **An instruction to go into the city for further information; and**
- **The onset of temporary blindness**

**Several of the details are contradicted in the other accounts: thus, in chapter 22, we are told that the men with Saul did not hear the voice, though they saw the light; and in chapter 26, we are told that Jesus made a much longer speech, telling Saul that he was appointing him on a mission to the Gentiles.**

**According to the account quoted above, Jesus gave no details of the mission he had in mind for Saul, but told him that he would be further informed in Damascus, where he was indeed visited by Ananias, who cured his blindness, converted him to Jesus' movement by baptism and also (presumably, though this is not said explicitly) informed him of his mission to the Gentiles.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever contrasted the depiction of Ananias in chapter 9 with the depiction of Ananias in chapter 22?**

**Ananias in chapter 9 is a Christian, but in chapter 22 he is a pious Jewish observer of the law, and it is not explained why as such but what I want you to notice because it is so important is the fact that Ananias, a Christian (follower and believer in Jesus) is also "well spoken of by all the Jews of that place."**

**Answer for yourself: If Ananias can be a follower of Jesus and at the same time exhibit Jewish piety and friendliness with all the other Jews and can be at the same time "well spoken of by all the Jews" then why does Saul's conversion to Christianity bring upon him the enmity of the Jews of Damascus?**

**Answer for yourself: What is the difference? Could it be that Saul's religious doctrines that he obtains and attached to Jesus that not only are so far from Biblical Judaism but contradicts Biblical Judaism could be the cause for this enmity that causes Paul to be beaten repeatedly and rejected by his fellow Jews?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that these "inconsistencies" in the accounts of Paul's conversion (Acts 9, 22, 26) come from the pen of the "same" writer? How can this be explained? Could the manuscripts have been tampered with and "edited?"**

# PAUL'S VISION: WAS IT THE FRUIT OF AN INTERNAL CONFLICT WITHIN HIS SOUL?

**Despite the above inconsistencies in the narrative, which are somewhat surprising in the course of a single book by a single author, it is possible to piece together an intelligible account of Saul's experience. He had a sudden overwhelming attack, in which he saw a flashing light and fell to the ground and heard a voice which convinced him of the presence of Jesus. He did not, apparently, see the face and form of Jesus, but only the bright light. When the experience was over, he got up from the ground and found that he was blind. The content of the experience was vague: he did not yet know how it was to affect his future life, but only that the Jesus whose**

**followers he had been persecuting had appeared to him in supernatural guise and reproached him, and that this meant that he, Saul, had been chosen for a great role.**

**Some commentators have tried to assign a physical cause to Saul's experience, such as a sun-stroke or epilepsy. Such explanations really explain nothing. But one only has to read slowly and closely at what Paul says about himself to understand the internal conflict within himself to understand the origin for such a revelation. Much more to the point is to investigate the psychological conditions for such a sudden conversion experience, and here the work of William James and other investigators is of value. They have shown that the background to such an experience is the "divided self". It is when a sensitive person is struggling, against great difficulties, to achieve physical unity that there may occur a unification experience of startling suddenness, after which the individual is able to embark on a new life with purpose and energy.**

## Paul's own statement of his spiritual dilemma is one of the classic portrayals of psychological conflict:

***We know that the law is spiritual; but I am not: I am unspiritual, the purchased slave of sin. I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine, for what I do is not what I want to do, but what I detest. But if what I do is against my will, it means that I agree with the law and hold it to be admirable. But as things are, it is no longer I who perform the action, but sin that lodges in me. For I know that nothing good lodges in me ? in my unspiritual nature, I mean ? for though the will to do good is there, the deed is not. The good which I want to do, I fail to do; but what I do is the wrong which is against my will; and if what I do is against my will, clearly it is no longer I who am the agent, but sin that has its lodging in me.***

***I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do the right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily members a different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law that is in my members, the law of sin. Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death? God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God! In a word, then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being, am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin.***

***The conclusion of the matter is this: there is no condemnation for those who are united with Christ Jesus, because in Christ Jesus the life-giving law of the Spirit has set you free from the law of sin and death. What the law could never do, because our lower nature robbed it of all potency, God has done: by sending his own Son.. . . (Romans 7:14-8:1)***

# HOW ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND THIS SPIRITUAL CONFLICT WITHIN THE SOUL OF PAUL...AS SEEN IN ROM. 7-8?

**Answer for yourself: Since Paul represents himself as a "Pharisee of Pharisees," then is what Paul is experiencing and relating in his epistles, particularly Romans 7 and Romans 8 concerning his internal struggles with sin, obedience, and guilt indicative and characteristic of Phariseeism? NO!**

**Many Christian commentators, especially of the German school, have asserted that the religious dilemma outlined here by Paul is typical of Phariseeism, and thus reveals him as the archetypal Pharisee before his conversion. For, according to these commentators, the Pharisees were guilt-ridden, under the burden of the Torah, with its many complicated laws and were obsessed with the fear that they might have failed to observe the law in its entirety. Paul thus (according to this theory) saw Jesus as the solution to his anxiety-ridden state**

**as a Pharisee: instead of having to strive with nagging consciousness of failure to fulfil a law which human nature was too degraded to obey, he could now rely, not on his own puny efforts, but on the initiative of God, who had sent His Son to take away the moral burden from mankind. Actually (though some of the writers of this school have failed to recognize this), there is no criticism of the Torah itself, or even of the rabbinical additions to it, in this passage: Paul is saying that the demands of the Torah are just, but that human nature is unable to comply with those demands because of the weakness of the flesh; and therefore, the Torah is no help to mankind in its moral dilemma, since it only serves to make clear its moral inadequacy, for which only the grace of God can compensate.**

**Answer for yourself: But is this characterization of Paul and Phariseeism accurate? No it is not!**

**More recent scholarship, however, has completely refuted the view of a gloomy, guilt-ridden Pharisaism, constantly in fear of damnation for having omitted the observance of some petty law. For there is no such sense of inevitable human failure to live up to the demands of the law; and on the other hand, in Pharisaism, there is the constant possibility of repentance and forgiveness, if any sin or error is committed. The emphasis, in Pharisaism, is just the opposite of that found in the above passage of Paul: that the demands of the law are reasonable and not beyond the power of human nature to fulfil; and this is merely the continuation of the emphasis of the Hebrew Bible itself, which says:**

***"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it'". . . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. (Deuteronomy 3O:11-14***

**If, however, human nature being admittedly frail, temptation is too strong and a sin is committed, Pharisaism stresses the availability of God's forgiveness through repentance and reparation; so that there is no sense of unbearable strain because every commandment has to be perfectly obeyed, as appears to be the case with Paul, both here and (more explicitly) in Galatians 3:10-12. On the contrary, Pharisaism everywhere stresses the concept that the Torah may be fulfilled on various levels, according to the state of spiritual advancement of the individual: thus there are the minimum requirements for ordinary people, but also the "measure of saintliness" (middat hasidim) for those who wish to acquire supererogatory virtue, though no one is blamed for not proceeding to such a level ? and may even be blamed for seeking it prematurely.**

**Further, the psychological dualism found in Paul's statement is most uncharacteristic of Pharisaism. The dichotomy, in Paul's thinking, between the flesh and the spirit, in which evils proceed from the flesh, which can be redeemed only by an inpouring of spirit from above, reflects a view of human nature that issued in the Christian doctrine of original sin. This doctrine is radically opposed to the Pharisaic concept of the essential unity of human nature. In Pharisaic thinking, there is indeed a conflict in the human psyche between two formations or inclinations, the "good inclination" (yetzer ha-toy) and the "evil inclination" (yetzer ha-ra); but neither of these inclinations is identified with the flesh or body and both of them are regarded as equally human. In this struggle between good and evil tendencies, the human being is regarded as having the initiative in his own hands, and not to require supernatural help. The instruction to be found in the Torah, however, is regarded as the greatest aid towards the victory of the good inclination; but, again, this instruction can be gained only by initiative on the part of the human being, who has to set himself to the task of studying the Torah and applying it to his life. The very effort involved in this essential process of education and**

study is regarded as efficacious against the power of the evil inclination. Thus, the application of energy and effort to the moral life is of the essence of Pharisaism, and nothing could be more alien to it than a moral despair which declares that human effort is useless and the only remedy lies in the grace exercised by God. Yet this moral despair is precisely the attitude powerfully described in Paul's account of his own dilemma.

Furthermore, in Pharisaic thinking, the moral struggle is directed not so much to the obliteration of the evil inclination as to its sublimation and redirection. It is recognized that the selfish energies of the evil inclination are essential to the vitality of the psyche and of the community, so that we find such expressions as the following (Midrash Rabbah on Ecciesiastes 3:11):

**Nehemiah, the son of Rabbi Samuel ben Nahman, said: 'And behold, it was very good' (Genesis 1:31) - this alludes to the creation of man and the Good Inclination, but the addition of the word 'very' alludes to the Evil Inclination. Is, then, the Evil Inclination 'very good'? It is in truth to teach you that were it not for the Evil Inclination, nobody would build a house, marry and beget children, and thus Solomon says, That it is a man's rivalry with his neighbor? (Ecclesiastes 4: 4).**

In other words, the impulse of aggression and rivalry provides the psychic energy for all action, and though the good inclination is engaged in building up a spirit of co-operation, it cannot do so by suppressing the selfish instincts but only by making use of them.

Thus the Pharisaic psychology of morality by no means sinks into an easy optimism about human nature, but declares morality to be a continual struggle; yet its theory not only unifies the psyche by giving it power over all its own processes, but also declares that the psyche becomes more and more unified as it progresses in the moral struggle.

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul's characterization of his plight in Romans 7 and 8 typical of what Pharisees believed concerning sin and its remedy in the Torah? No, not at all!**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul prided himself as being a Pharisee of Pharisees then why does he not hold this very "central" doctrine concerning the struggle of the flesh and the spirit; of sin and it's remedy as understood by mainline Phariseeism and Biblical Judaism?**

At the opposite pole to this is Paul's picture of the moral struggle, in which he portrays the psyche as hopelessly divided and unable to progress without direct supernatural intervention. There is thus no confirmation to be found in this passage of Paul's alleged Pharisaism; on the contrary, he seems, on this evidence, to have been in a spiritual situation entirely different from that of Pharisaism before his conversion to Jesus. If Paul was a Pharisee, he was a unique one.

## PAUL'S IDEAS AND BELIEFS....RESIDE OUTSIDE OF PHARISEEISM ...PAUL IS A GNOSTIC...NOT A PHARISEE

As we have demonstrated in earlier articles in this series Paul was not a Pharisee but is made to look as if he was by the writers of the New Testament. This realization, that Paul was not a Pharisee, is a result which we have reached in other contexts too - for example, in the context of Paul's alliance with the High Priest. When Paul repeatedly comes to appear so untypical as to be unique, it seems a more plausible hypothesis that he was not a Pharisee at all.

But if we look for a parallel to Paul's analysis of the human condition among the philosophies and creeds of the ancient world, it is not hard to find. In style, terminology and content, Paul's declaration can be paralleled in the writings of the Gnostics. This will be shown more fully in later articles on this website, but at present it is relevant to point out that Paul's psychological dualism, here expressed,

is clearly grounded in a metaphysical dualism.

Paul is saying that there are two laws in the world: the law of the spirit (pneuma) and the law of the flesh (sarx). If there are two independent and conflicting laws (or systems of organization) in the universe, it is clearly implied that there are two opposing forces, that of the spirit and that of the flesh. This is the doctrine characteristic of Gnosticism. It is also a doctrine to which the Pharisaic rabbis were utterly opposed, as the form of idolatry (or denial of the unity of God) that was endemic in their era. Thus Paul's espousal of this philosophy shows him to be not only unPharisaic, but unJewish, for not only Pharisaism but every variety of Judaism opposed it.

# ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN AWAY THE GNOSTICISM OF PAUL

**Some, who are acquainted with Gnosticism, see all the way through Paul and see him from what he really is...a Gnostic. This charge does not set will with Christians who look to Paul as the hero of the faith. This charge has to be defused at all costs and many attempts have been made throughout history to do so. In order to try to dispel the notion that Paul was not a Pharisee but a Gnostic some recent writers have proposed a different interpretation of the passage under discussion. Aware of the fact that a knowledge of Pharisaism does not bear out the German interpretation of the passage (as a diagnosis of the spiritual dilemma of the typical Pharisee), they argue that Paul is here not discussing his own spiritual situation (before conversion to Jesus) at all. Being a Pharisee (as they assume) he could not possibly be starting from such a dilemma, since Pharisees were too confident in the efficacy of their covenant with God, and grateful for the instruction given to them in the Torah, to find themselves in such an impasse. Moreover, as a Pharisee, Paul would surely be aware of the availability of God's forgiveness for any sins committed, through repentance and reparation; yet Paul makes no reference to this as a factor in the situation.** Therefore, these writers urge (Stendhal, Gager, Gaston), what Paul is writing about here is the spiritual situation of a Gentile, who is aware of the saving grace of the Torah, but feels himself excluded from it. **They would have us believe that as an Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul would have had a special sympathy for Gentiles who had been awakened to a sense of guilt by acquaintance with the Jewish Torah, but had no means of appeasing this guilt; it was for them, and not for the Jews, that Jesus Christ had come to Earth and suffered, and it was through him that Gentiles could attain the same state of grace that, for Jews, could be attained through the Torah. Thus, according to this interpretation, Paul was not abrogating the Torah at all, but simply providing an alternative mode of salvation for Gentiles; the idea that salvation through Jesus Christ implied the abrogation of the Torah even for Jews was a later unfortunate aberration, caused by a misreading of Paul's writings.**

**Answer for yourself: Is there anything to be found wrong with such an "assumption" that Paul was speaking of the Gentile's plight in Rom. 7 and 8 and not all of mankind? Yes there is!**

The writers of this school all seem entirely unaware that Judaism already provided a way of salvation for Gentiles, and that therefore no Pharisee (as Paul is assumed to be in this argument) would feel pity for the exclusion of the Gentiles from salvation. There were two methods of salvation for Gentiles in Pharisee thinking: either by full conversion to Judaism, in which case the convert would become a full Jew and participate in the covenant with Israel; or by adherence to the Noahide Laws which constituted a covenant and a Torah for Gentiles as revealed by God to Noah, the patriarch of the Gentiles.

In any case, this whole interpretation is a most unnatural reading of the passage in question, which has always been held, with great literary and psychological justification, to be a moving expression of Paul's own personal dilemma. **The idea that when Paul says "I" in this passage he is merely putting himself sympathetically into the place of the Gentiles is most unconvincing to anyone who reads with an ear for the resonances of the passage. It is true that Paul is not referring only to himself; he is universalizing his own situation, and giving a representation of the universal human plight, as he sees it, but with the special depth of feeling of one who has felt this plight in his own soul and for whom the normal distractions of life have proved**

**ineffectual.**

**Answer for yourself: Understanding that these ideas expressed by Paul are totally foreign to the Pharisees and Biblical Judaism what can they tell us about the man Paul?**

**But the new reading of the passage has at least the merit that it directs our attention to the undoubted fact that it is an expression of the plight of the Gentiles in the face of a Torah which they despair of mastering. This indeed is a most valuable insight; but it needs to be supplemented by the further insight that Paul identifies himself so completely with the situation he describes that he cannot be regarded as a Pharisee empathizing with the Gentiles, but instead must be recognized as a Gentile himself, i.e. as a Gentile convert to Judaism who has failed in his quest and has entered into a state of despair from which only some psychological revolution can rescue him. The passage mirrors so perfectly the spiritual situation of one who has tried and failed to become a Jew (a good Pharisee) that it can only be regarded as evidence (taken together with the other evidence presented in NT where Paul defends himself from other rejection from the Jerusalem church and the Apostles) that this was indeed Paul's situation. This throws light on those passages in Paul's letters in which Paul actually speaks of himself as a Gentile by the use of "we" to comprehend both himself and the Gentiles. These passages have proved somewhat puzzling to commentators, who, however, have found the ready explanation that Paul's sympathy with the Gentiles has made him regard himself as one of them, despite his supposed Pharisaic upbringing.**

**Galatians 3:14: "... that in Christ the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, that *we* might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." A better explanation, in the light of the evidence presented is that Paul here, in the heat of his emotion, has forgotten his persona as Pharisee, and has lapsed into his real identity (himself a Gentile) and motivation.**

**We may now turn back to Paul's revelation outside Damascus. Let us not forget that Paul had left the Sadducees because, as the Ebionites tell us, he was rebuffed in his attempt to marry the daughter of the High Priest. Being himself desirous to rise to greatness in Judaism and finding doors for such an ascent closed to him, to say that Paul was depressed was an understatement. The psychological conditions for such an experience are extreme turmoil of mind, induced by a sense of spiritual failure or disaster. Such a condition is likely to arise in a person who is torn between two different cultures, to one of which he is emotionally tied, while his ambitions and highest aspirations are centered on the other. This is the situation of a convert; and Paul's Damascus experience becomes psychologically and sociologically understandable as soon as we think of him as a recent convert to Judaism, instead of as a Pharisee. There is thus the strongest similarity between Paul's mental condition and that of his greatest follower in the later Church, Saint Augustine, who also struggled painfully against a pagan background and found his rest, after a mental explosion, in the same kind of synthesis, and in a sense of deep affinity with the ideas of Paul.**

# THE EBIONITE ACCOUNT OF PAUL CONVERSION TO JUDAISM

**If we follow, then, the Ebionite account of Paul as a convert to Judaism, we may trace the biographical events that led to the road to Damascus.**

**On becoming converted to Judaism, he adopted the Hebrew name Saul, which was the name of the ill-fated King of Israel who came from the tribe of Benjamin. It was probably for this reason that Paul later invented for himself a genealogical descent from the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1; Philippians 3;5).**

**Answer for yourself: Is there anything strange about Paul remarking that he was from the tribe of Benjamin?**

**As it happens, it was impossible for any Jew at this time to describe himself truthfully as of the tribe of Benjamin. While it is true that part of the tribe of Benjamin survived in Palestine after the**

deportation of the Ten Tribes by Shalmaneser of Assyria, the Benjaminites later intermarried with the tribe of Judah to such an extent that they lost their separate identity and all became Judahites or Jews. Only the Levites, the priestly tribe, and that section of the Levites called the kohanim or priests (the descendants of Aaron) retained their identity because they needed to do so for cultic reasons. All other Jews were simply known as Israelites for cultic purposes (e.g. for entry into the various areas of the Temple, consumption or nonconsumption of the terumak or priestly food) and no distinction was made for any religious purpose between Judahites or Benjaminites, so that there was no motive for preserving the distinction. Consequently, when Paul described himself as "of the tribe of Benjamin", this was sheer bluff, though the recipients of his letters, being Gentile converts to Christianity, were in no position to know this.

**Answer for yourself: What was Saul's name before he became converted to Judaism?**

**It was probably some Greek name, such as Solon, that sounded something like Saul, or at least had the same initial letter. His original Gentile name was certainly not Paul, for this name was adopted by him for the first time later in his career as a Christian.**

According to the Ebionites, Saul's parents were Gentiles who had not been converted to Judaism; Saul himself, then, was the first of his family to be converted. **Nevertheless, it is quite possible that Saul's parents were semi-converts of the type known as** "God-fearers"; i.e Gentiles who were attracted to Judaism and believed in its main tenets, but did not wish to take the drastic step of full conversion to Judaism, which involved circumcision, in the case of males, and adoption of Jewish nationality. "God-fearers" were given a respected status in Pharisaic theory, and were regarded as having attained salvation even without conversion to full Judaism, since such full conversion was regarded as more a matter of vocation than of necessity. **But it was quite a common pattern for the child of "God-fearing" parents to proceed to full conversion, and it may well be that Saul was conforming to this pattern.** Even as the son of "God-fearing" parents, however, Saul would have been exposed in his early childhood to pagan influences far more than a fully Jewish boy. In Tarsus, his education would have been with pagan children, and his imagination would have been impressed by the beautiful pagan ceremonies of mourning and joy associated with the death and resurrection of certain pagan gods worshipped in Tarsus.

**In Acts 23, we find mention of Paul's "sister's son" who lived in Jerusalem and acted as Paul's messenger to the Roman commandant. This has been taken to be confirmation of Paul's claim in his letters that his family were native-born inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we thus often find in the writings of scholars references to "Paul's married sister, who lived in Jerusalem". However, the fact that Paul had a nephew in Jerusalem does not prove that his sister and her husband lived there too. It is more likely that Paul's nephew, following his example, had left Tarsus and had come to Jerusalem, either as a convert or as a "Godfearer". As a matter of fact, if Paul did have a whole constellation of relatives in Jerusalem, it is surprising that none of them is mentioned, apart from his nephew, as taking any interest, positive or negative, in his career.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the status of Paul's parents?**

**It is often thought that they must have been wealthy, but this is not necessarily the case. Paul was an artisan by trade, and this is hardly consistent with being the son of wealthy parents. Paul's trade has been traditionally identified as that of a tent-maker; but more accurate scholarship has shown that the Greek word involved really means** "leather-worker"**. It has been asserted that Paul's engagement in this rather humble trade is not inconsistent with wealthy parenthood, since it was the practice of Pharisee rabbis to engage in such trades in order to preserve their independence and avoid making their living out of their knowledge of the Torah. Since Paul was not at any time a Pharisee rabbi, the point is irrelevant; and, in any case, those Pharisee rabbis who had large independent incomes did not engage in such trades. The rabbinical injunction sometimes adduced that a father should "teach his son a trade" is also not relevant, since this again applied only to those who could not provide their sons with an independent income.**

**On the other hand, there is evidence, taken to be incontrovertible, that Paul's father was a wealthy man: this is that he was both a Roman citizen and a citizen of Tarsus. Undoubtedly, Paul is represented as claiming that not only he, but his father too, were Roman citizens (Acts 22: 28). But there exists reasons to show that this was not the case; the mistake is probably that of Luke, the author of Acts. Paul acquired his Roman citizenship, not by birth, but by special circumstances when he was an adult. As for Paul's claim to be a citizen of Tarsus, this is not very definite. He says at one point, "I am a Jew, a Tarsian from Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." At another point, he merely calls himself "a native of Tarsus in Cilicia". It may be that he was speaking loosely (or represented as speaking loosely) when he called himself a "citizen of no mean city", meaning by "citizen" merely "citydweller" rather than in the technical sense of one who was formally a citizen. If, in fact, Paul was a full citizen of Tarsus, this would certainly mean that his father was one before him; and this would argue a certain degree of wealth, since full citizenship was granted only to people of some wealth and prominence. It would also, incidentally, make it unlikely that Paul's father was a Jew, since membership in the citizen body of a Greek polis involved membership of a native phyla or tribe and participation in pagan worship.**

**There is only one conclusion possible when all the evidence is weighed. One must conclude then that Paul's father was possibly a Tarsian citizen, though not a Roman citizen, and that, even if moderately well off, he was not wealthy enough to provide his son with an independent income. The young Saul, therefore, knew that he had to make his way by his own skill and wits.**

**Even though Saul, after his conversion to Judaism and emigration from Tarsus to Judaea, never actually became a Pharisee rabbi, the mere fact that he felt a strong urge in later life to represent himself as having been one must be significant. It means that at some point in his life this had been his dream. If his parents were indeed "God-fearers", they must have told him in his youth about the famous Pharisees of Judaea, who occupied the apex of Jewish religious learning and piety, and were almost legendary figures to the Jews and "God-fearers" of the Diaspora. The young Saul would have heard the names of the greatest Pharisee leaders, Hillel, Shammai and Gamaliel. Perhaps even in Tarsus, he may have seen one or two of the noted Pharisee figures of his day, for many of the sages were travellers, who briefly visited Jewish communities in both the Roman and Parthian Empires, in order to preach and deliver messages from the central authorities of Pharisaism in Jerusalem. The young Saul, planning to be a full convert, would be impelled by his naturally ambitious nature to see himself as no ordinary convert, but as progressing so well in his studies and piety as to become a great Pharisee leader himself. This was not unheard of, for some converts to Judaism had indeed reached such eminence: there was, for example, Onkelos the Proselyte, whose translation of the Pentateuch into Aramaic became a standard work in the Pharisaic movement. It was even taught among the Pharisees that one of the biblical prophets, Obadiah, was a proselyte, for which reason the name Obadiah was often adopted by proselytes to replace their pagan names.**

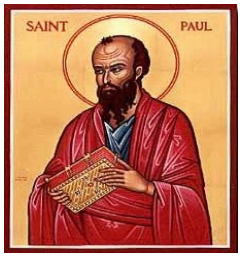
**Unfortunately, young Saul's dream was doomed to disappointment. The fact that we find him, some time after his arrival in Judaea, employed as a police official in the pay of the Sadducean High Priest shows that his plans had gone awry. We may surmise that he made an abortive attempt to rise in the Pharisee movement; that he enrolled with some Pharisee teacher for a while (though not with Rabban Gamaliel, who accepted only advanced students), but proved a failure. His Epistles show him to be eloquent and imaginative, but lacking in logical ability; and this would have been an insurmountable obstacle in a Pharisee academy. Moreover, his educational base was too feeble; he had too much to learn to be able to shine and, being a person of soaring ambition (as his subsequent career shows), he would not be able to endure mediocrity. He broke off his studies and in desperation took whatever job he could obtain. Instead of his dream of respected status as a rabbi, the reality was ignominy as a member of the High Priest's band of armed hooligans.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




### THE AFTERMATH OF PAUL'S DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE...A NEW RELIGION OR A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING?

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

## A NEW PAULINE VISION...OR WAS IT A RESTATEMENT OF THE SYNTHESIS OF ANCIENT WISDOM RELIGION & THEIR DIVINE MYSTERIES?

**It is not uncommon to find in such circumstances of Spiritual conflict and disappointment, that many individuals suffer a nervous breakdown or a mental collapse. Of course this is not indicative of all and how they would respond. Some individuals, however, possessing great gifts and psychical resources can meet the situation by a sudden psychological leap, an overwhelming synthesis or multiple insight that unites all the disparate elements of conflict into a single solution. Such a solution is apt to take the form of a vision, welling from the unconscious mind without apparent inference or conscious effort, and so having for the person involved a supernatural quality.**

**Saul's vision on the road to Damascus, shattering and painful as it was, solved all his conflicts and raised him, according to Hyam Maccoby, author of The Mythmaker: Paul And The Invention Of Christianity, from the abyss of self-hatred and failure. By it, he was able to reconcile all the conflicting needs of his complex nature. Paul arrived at the solution to his apparent Spiritual conflict and failure to meet the standards for acceptance; both in his pursuits within the membership of the Sadducees and Pharisees. He cleverly saw that the answer to his malady was to arrive at a religious synthesis of his many ideas and experiences and appoint himself as the "ambassador" of "his gospel." Simply said, the panorama of Jewish sacred history was combined with the individual salvation and consolation of pagan mystery religion; the divide in his own soul was answered by a divide in the universe, similar to that found in the dualism of Gnosticism; and, finally, from the personal point of view, his desire for a surpassing role for himself was satisfied in a way far beyond his previous ambitions (Maccoby, Mythmaker, p. 100-101). In other words, Paul's vision initiated him into the Spiritual world of Gnosticism.**

**Prior to Paul's vision, Jewish Christianity relied solely upon public, exoteric teaching which Christ and the apostles offered to the masses. Gnostic Christians claimed to offer, in addition, their secret teaching, known only to the few. In the "Jesus Story" we find examples where the Jewish Christ shared with his disciples certain mysteries, which he kept secret from outsiders. We discover in Mark 4:11-12 that there were two levels of Spiritual teachings: "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand;**

**..." According to the Gnostics, some of the disciples kept secret these esoteric teachings and taught them only in private to certain persons who had proven themselves to be Spiritually mature, and who therefore qualified for "initiation into gnosis" and into secret Spiritual knowledge. Paul, referring to himself in the third person, says that he was "caught up to the third heaven - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know." In an ecstatic trance, Paul heard "things that cannot be told, which man may not utter." Though his Spiritual communication with Christ, Paul says he discovered "hidden mysteries" and "secret wisdom," which, he explains, he shares only with those Christians he considers "mature" but not with everyone. Gnostic Christians like the later Valentinus says that their own gospels and revelations disclose those same secret teachings mentioned by St. Paul. These writings tell countless stories about the risen Christ, a Spiritual being whom the supposed human Jesus in the "Jesus Story" represented. For this reason, the Gnostic Christians could not and would not tell the "Jesus Story" as if a biography. The Gnostic's Jesus was a Spiritual Christ, not a literal or historical Jesus of Nazareth.**

**For the realizations of the ambitions of Paul following his vision on the Damascus road, the cleverness of his remedy to his plight is overwhelming. He was to devise a synthesis of religious ideas that guaranteed world-wide acceptance; acceptance that is with everyone but the Jewish Petrines and the literalizers and carnalizers of the Christ who had already rejected him. Paul would provide for the world "what they already" had; and in that stroke of genius would be the guarantee of his success and acceptance. For you see, the broad appeal of Christianity stems from the fact that it is a synthesis of the most important doctrines which had already been developed in the great pre-Christian pagan cultures during thousands of years. Had this not been so, it would simply have been a narrow creed and would, like many others, soon have vanished from the stage of history. The central elements in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are:**

- **The divine, atoning, and sacrificial savior, who gives his own life to redeem mankind and who, by rising from the grave, is empowered to confer divinity and immortality upon them also.**
- **An ethical system which makes everyone economically and politically equal in a social order where want and injustice are forever abolished.**
- **A doctrine concerning the after-life according to which the redeemed will enjoy everlasting happiness in communion with each other in a kingdom of righteousness.**
- **The promise of an imminent Second Coming, when the Savior as the Great Messiah will reappear in power to conduct the Last Judgment and institute the kingdom of heaven, which will then belong to the saints forever.**
- **The redeemed would be healed of all physical and spiritual maladies in time for all eternity.**

**What will be most shocking to you as a typical Gentile Christian is that the immediate source of these concepts was the Essene Gnostics, often called by the later Church Fathers the "first Christians." The ultimate origins of such religious must be traced to the mystery-cults and the major religions of the pre-Christian -world.**

**Saul, at one point working for the Sadducees and the High Priest, had just been taking part in the ignoble persecution of Petrine followers of the hoped for Jewish Messiah. In so doing, Paul was following the orders of the politically motivated High Priest, a Sadducee. Paul, working for the High priest, reveals that he was a Sadducee in such regards, at least at this part of his life. He had now been given a task of that included violence toward other people. Paul had official sanction by the High Priest to kidnap certain persons from Damascus and convey them to the High Priest's custody for condemnation as plotters of sedition against the Roman occupation of Judaea. The fact that he had been entrusted with this mission, and made the leader of the band of kidnappers, shows that Saul was regarded with some favor by the High Priest. Yet Saul must have regarded his promotion in the secret police with a mixture of feelings: how different from the kind of promotion he had pictured for himself when he came to Judaea as a hopeful convert.**

**This conflict of feelings held by the picture presented us of the New Testament Paul was only aggravated and enlarged by the nature of the movement which he had been deputed to investigate and persecute. For at the centre of the beliefs of this Essene-Christian movement was a figure who had supposedly died and had been resurrected. This supposed resurrected Essene leader was called the "Teacher of Righteousness of the Essenes" who had been crucified according to the Essenes around 70 B.C.E. and was expected to return as their deliverer before the end of time. These earliest Essenes Christians chronicle that several of their "Teachers" met untimely deaths at the hands of their theological opposition in Jerusalem who were in league with Roman authorities.**

**When Saul, in the course of his duties of arrest and interrogation, probed into the belief of Jesus' followers in the resurrection of Jesus, he must have felt a shock of recognition from his pagan background. Here again, where he least expected it, was the similar figure who had moved him as a child: the dying and resurrected god-man and deity, who was always basically the same under all his various names and disguises, whether Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Krishna, or Baal-Taraz. Bound up with the worship of this universal deity was a deeply emotional experience: that of dying and being reborn together with the deity, as the *"passion"* of these earlier dying and rising gods were enacted in dramatic and ecstatic ceremonies before their followers.**

**Because of his upbringing in Tarsus with his pagan background, Saul would have read into the story of the death and resurrection of the Jerusalem Church's Jesus meanings which were in fact absent from the minds of the Nazarenes and Ebionites themselves, for these followers of a supposed literal and historical Jesus, otherwise called the Petrines, were people of Pharisee background on the whole and indeed still regarded themselves as Pharisees, and, therefore, as utterly opposed to pagan schemes of salvation based on dying and resurrected deities. Their belief in the resurrection of Jesus was conceived within the patterns of Jewish thought; that is to say, they thought of it as a miracle wrought by God, but many of them did not think of Jesus himself as anything other than human. Others, however, say him as God literally incarnated into one human being. No doubt they read some sacrificial meanings into the event, for the idea of vicarious suffering by saints on behalf of a sinful community, for example, Israel as a sacrificial "suffering servant" for the Jewish people, but not the entire world, was not an idea alien to Judaism, being found in the Bible in the story of Moses, for example, or in the figure of the suffering servant of Isaiah as the corporate nation. But even then, these were isolated events and allegories at best. But the idea of the sacrifice of a deity was utterly alien to every variety of Judaism.**

**The idea of Jesus, to his early Jewish Petrine followers was not a deity, but a Messiah: i.e., a human king of the House of David, whose mission was to liberate Israel from foreign rule and the world from the sway of military empires. As the legend goes, instead of succeeding in this, he had met with crucifixion which was interpreted by them to mean that the sins of Israel had not been sufficiently expiated by the campaign of repentance which the prophets and seers like Jesus had conducted among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. In other words, Israel had not merited the Kingdom nor her King and the Messianic prophecies would therefore not be fulfilled. Accordingly, therefore Jesus himself had to fill up the measure of expiation by undergoing a cruel death, preparatory to his miraculous resurrection as a triumphant conqueror. But his return to Earth as a resurrected figure would not change his status as a human king, any more than the legend of the resurrection of Lazarus raised the latter above human status.**

**To Saul, however, the idea of Jesus as a sacrificial figure would have had resonances that was quite different. The personal and individual significance of the death of the god in the mystery cults would have been aroused in him, especially in his highly individualized plight; whereas, for the Nazarenes in general, the significance of the legend of the death and resurrection of Jesus-like figure was more of communal than individual or personal significance, foreshowing the coming of the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth and the universal Messianic age on Earth. The mystery cults had arisen in a Greco-Roman environment in which national loyalties had been crushed by the vast machine of a bureaucratic empire; consequently, detribalized individuals had sought individual salvation in them, hoping for an individual immortality by dying and rising with the deity. Among the Jews, this disintegration of community feeling had not occurred; to them, salvation still meant the salvation of the community and of all mankind in an Earthly Kingdom of God, not an escape into an otherworldly disembodied state.**

**In the time when Paul lived in the first century, central to the Ancient Wisdom religious was the concept of the divine spark or seed buried within each person. It was the purpose of the Ancient Mysteries to bring to life this divine spark in each person so that it would illuminate life on this earth. As mentioned above, this divine spark was symbolized by various figures at different times and in different places. Their names were man, Horus, Orpheus, Dionysus, Mithra, Krishna, Adonis, Tammuz, Hercules and so on. They were all called by various titles depending upon the nation, and later given by Rome the unflattering names of "pagan" Christs. The philosophers of the ancient world knew that these figures were symbolic, and not historical men. Some 2,000 years ago in the area of the eastern Mediterranean, the divine soul or spark incarnated within every child of God was called "the Christ," taken from "karast" or "krist," an Egyptian term for the annointed mummy. Early Christianity found in the earliest Essene Christians, for example, was not a new religion, but only at later restatement of the Ancient Wisdom Religions and their metaphysical teachings. Christians of any intelligence during the first two centuries at least did not regard their movement as the bearer of any new first light into the heathen darkness, but only the republication of very ancient truth. Even early Chruch Fathers like Augustine makes this same claim: One of the great admissions by Augustine in his writings is one which pulls the underpinnings out from under the whole of the "unique" Christian Religion as the "only" path to Heaven which Roman Christianity attests today. I can remember it well when studying Augustine and his theology the passage that jumped out at me like few that I had read in that time of my life. In what I was reading of Augustine one day I was startled by what he said and it stopped me on a dime and I had to re-read it several times to see not only the picture of what Augustine was painting but at the same time identify with his own concern about how could there be Christianity before Christ? As I read more I felt the concern and identified with the great mystery of which Augustine had written. I began to see that Augustine, the supposed greatest Church Father ever, had studied this question regarding a "Christianity before Jesus" and answered it accordingly as follows: "*That which is known as the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist; from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion, which already existed began to be called Christianity."* (Augustine, Retractt. I, xiii, cited by Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn in his Shadow of The Third Century, p. 3). The "gospel" which St. Paul received by internal revelation was that an indwelling god is himself being brought to birth within the womb of humanity. Each individual is gestating a divinity within the deeps of his own nature. Christianity has fervently exhorted us to look into the empyrean to find the unapproachable God. All the while the infant deity slumbers unheeded within the heart. Christianity has largely nullified the force of St. Paul's almost frantic cry to us: in 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"**

**It would be while persecuting the followers of the Jerusalem congregation, that Paul will become aware of Jesus as a figure that seemed strangely familiar to him, answering a need in his Soul suppressed since his childhood by the rationality and conscious truisms of Judaism. In particular, his strong imagination would have been captured by the picture of Jesus dying on the cross as had many of the crucified savors before him. For this picture would have reminded him irresistibly of the myths and legends he had heard about and whose statues he had seen, for example, of Attis in Cilicia where these legendary gods had been imaged as if hanged on trees or crosses, whose dripping, flayed body fertilized the fields and whose mysteries renewed the Souls of his devotees. Paul was beginning his Spiritual awakening to his true divinity.**

## THE BEGINNING OF PAUL'S AWAKENING; NOT A NEW RELIGION...A RELIGIOUS SYNTHESIS REALIZED WITHIN HIMSELF

**The following is a summary of Maccoby's views upon Paul. According to Hyam Maccoby, Saul was attempting to live an unspiritual life of a secular police officer who worked for the High Priest, his hopes of attaining Spiritual stature in the Pharisaic movement having been disappointed. But the disquiet of his soul could not be stilled; and when his distress erupted into a psychological attack on the road to Damascus, the centre of the disturbance was occupied by a figure which had been forming in his unconscious mind - that of a Hanged God, the focus of both guilt and hope. By identifying this figure with Jesus, whose followers he had been persecuting, Saul made sense out of the meaninglessness into which his life had degenerated. For instead of being merely a hireling of the High Priest, harrying people for pay, he now saw himself as a historically significant person - he who had persecuted the dying and resurrected god and who, by his very guilt, could switch to the antithetical role of the god's chief apostle. This sudden change from utter sinfulness to utter**

**release and sinlessness became the motif of the Spiritual message that St. Paul would not develop that was tied to the vision which had marked him out from all mankind.**

## ANALYSIS OF THE ACCOUNTS OF PAUL'S SPIRITUAL CRISIS

**We may now turn to an examination of the account which Paul himself gives of the crisis of his life, his vision of Jesus and the mission resulting from it:**

***You have heard what my manner of life was when I was still a practising Jew: how savagely I persecuted the church of God, and tried to destroy it; and how in the practice of our national religion I was outstripping many of my Jewish contemporaries in my boundless devotion to the traditions of my ancestors. But then in his good pleasure God, who had set me apart from birth and called me through his grace, chose to reveal his Son to me and through me, in order that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles. When that happened, without consulting any human being, without going up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went off at once to Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus. (Galatians 1:10-17)***

**Paul introduces this account in the following way in Galatians 1:11-12:**

***But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.***

**It is clear from this passage that it is wrong to talk about the experience of Paul on the road to Damascus as a "conversion," as is usually done. The use of this term presupposes something that ought not to be presupposed: that Christianity as we understand it today already existed before Paul had his personal Spiritual awakening and experience, and that therefore all that was required was that Paul should be "converted" to this already existing religion and expression of Christianity among the Gentile nations of the world. The correct designation of Paul's experience is the word "revelation" which he uses for himself, not the word "conversion" that others have chosen to describe Paul's vision. In fact, Christianity, as a religion separate from Judaism, did not exist before Paul per say, but stems from this event when mistakenly understood and interpreted. Paul's vision of Jesus was the epiphany or divine appearance of the God indwelling mankind which initiated a Pauline resurrection from the dead and a restatement of the Ancient Wisdom and Sacred Science, just as the appearance of God in the burning bush initiated Judaism through the life of Moses. To call Paul's revelation of the indwelling Christ in mankind Christianity and accordingly tie it together with today's Christianity is not possible and a grievous error, as the Christianity experienced by St. Paul has little if anything to do with the Christianity that exists today, much of which has stolen the name of St. Paul and affixed it to today's expression of an anti-Pauline Christianity. In truth, the Christianity of St. Paul and the Christianity of the Jerusalem Church has little if anything in common. Just as Moses was marked out by the revelation of the burning bush as the founding prophet of Judaism, so Paul by his Damascus vision became the founding prophet of a mystical and metaphysical Christianity; not a literal or historical Jesus Christ nor a literal or historical Christianity. That is the work of the Jerusalem Petrines who never interpreted the Ancient Scriptures mystically, allegorically, or metaphysically.**

**Paul, throughout his Epistles, insists on referring to "my gospel" or, as here, "the gospel announced by me" (translated above, in the New English Bible translation as "the gospel you heard me preach," which is inexact and misleading, in that it makes Paul sound more modest than he was. Paul is thus claiming a direct line to Christ - not only because of his Damascus revelation, but also because of other revelations subsequent to it. Paul is claiming a much higher authority than that of the Jerusalem apostles, Peter, James and John. The author of the unhistorical Book of Acts wished his readers to believe that the Jerusalem congregation's authority came from supposedly acquaintance with the Earthly Jesus. Paul's authentic Epistles maintains that his authority is derived from acquaintance with the indwelling and heavenly Christ Jesus, now divorced from all weakness of the flesh and assuming the omniscience of a transcendent deity.**

**They Petrines of the Jerusalem Church regarded themselves as Jews, who were differentiated from their fellow Jews only by their belief in Jesus as their coming Messiah. They confidently believed that when the resurrected Jesus returned to Earth, which they expected to happen very soon, God would perform through his agency such astounding miracles as the defeat of the Romans by supernatural means and their expulsion from the Holy Land, that all Jews would accept him as the Messiah, and would be united under his royal rule in a theocracy governed by the prescriptions of the Torah of Moses, as interpreted by the Oral Law, administered by the Pharisee masters. They did not envisage any split between Jesus' movement and the main body of Jewish believers. They themselves observed the Jewish laws and prayed in the same words as their fellow Jews, with the addition of certain prayers (such as the Lord's Prayer which is known in Judaism as the Amidah) which were added to the normal synagogue services in the way that special groups among the Jews (for example, the Hasidim) have always done without any sense of schism. The Jerusalem Jesus movement did not observe the special ritual known as the Eucharist, Communion, or Mass that marked off Christianity as a separate religion.**

**Paul's vision of the indwelling Christ reveals to us that he was the first to envisage Christianity as a higher understanding of the Christ/Messiah message preached only literally and historically by the Jerusalem congregation. In order to preach the truth about the indwelling Christ, Paul asserted his own claim to special authority through his series of visions of the heavenly Jesus Christ (as he called him, for the first time using "Christ" as a divine title), beginning with his Damascus vision.**

## PAUL MAINTAINS AND BOASTS OF HIS SEPARATION FROM THE JERUSALEM CHURCH...PAUL AND HE PETRINES HAVE A SPECIAL REVELATION THAT THE PETRINES DON'T ...AND WHICH THE PETRINES WOULD NOT ACCEPT

**Paul insists on his independence of the Jerusalem authorities. He says that, after his Damascus revelation:**

***"without consulting any human being, without going up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went off at once to Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus."***

**By this statement Paul is rejecting the idea that he was a convert to Christianity. A convert is a person who humbly approaches the authorities of the religion which he wishes to join and submits himself for instruction. Paul denies such a description of his entry altogether: Paul did not seek out the Jerusalem authorities or submitted to their instruction. Paul does not seek instruction either in Damascus or in Jerusalem; instead he goes off "to Arabia." The impression conveyed by the latter information is purposeful on Paul's part as he is arranging events in his life to show others that his experience parallels's Moses' experience. Paul is the new Moses! This was calculated on Paul's part to reinforce the analogy between Paul and Moses. Just as Moses, on receiving the tablets of the law, stayed in the Arabian wilderness for forty days and forty nights (Exodus 34: 28), so Paul retired to the desert to assimilate and meditate on the new revelation before returning to impart it to mankind.**

**Of course, the story told us in the unhistorical Book of Acts is very different than that told in the seven authentic Epistles of Paul. Here we are told a contradictory account in the Book of Acts where Paul, contradicting what he said in the Book of Galatians, did indeed seek instruction, first in Damascus and then in Jerusalem. In Damascus he is cured of his blindness (which Paul himself in Galatians, does not mention) by Ananias, who then instructs him in his mission; and then Paul, after escaping from Damascus, goes immediately to Jerusalem, where he is introduced by Barnabas to the Apostles, and where he adopts an active but subordinate role in Jesus' movement. Thus, the picture of St. Paul in the Book of Acts is thus indeed that of a convert, not of a man motivated by an internal Spiritual awakening of his own divinity as Paul shared in his Book of Galatians which many scholars believer to be Paul's first Epistles. The Book of Acts, we must remind ourselves, was written according to most scholars, in the middle of the second century almost a hundred years following the time when the historical Paul actually lived. A great deal had happened to Jesus' movement in that time. The emerging Church had turned by this time into a proto-orthodox expression of Christianity and had adopted many of the former Essene ideas of St. Paul, but was concerned to derive these ideas not Paul, but rather from Jesus himself and therefore in the process deny Paul's gospel and authority. Moreover, contrary to extra-biblical accounts but yet according to the Book of Acts account, the Christian Church had adopted an account of the early Nazarenes in which there had been no rift between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles: the myth now was that supposedly that all the Apostles, including Peter and James, had believed, like Paul, in the divine Jesus and in his role as a divine sacrifice for the sins of mankind - in other words, in the mystery religion doctrine for which, in historical fact, Paul alone had been responsible.**

**In order to preserve the doctrine of the essential unity of the early Roman Christian Church and thus its supposed unbroken continuity with Jesus himself, which would have been seriously jeopardized by any acknowledgment of Paul's originality and his Gnostic break with the Jerusalem Apostles, it became necessary to provide a link between the Petrine literal and historical Jesus and the Chruch. If this was to be successful, Paul had to be represented as just one of the Apostles, indeed the latest and least authoritative of them all, who had learned his Christianity from James and Peter, even though he was given a special role as "apostle to the Gentiles." Thus Paul's Apostleship was not to be openly accepted. The Book of Acts and indeed the Gospels themselves were composed (or rather edited from previous materials) in order to consolidate this myth of the unity of the early Church and Paul and to derive from Jesus himself the ideas of the later Church, which in fact were based on those of the Gnostic Paul and his Gnostic vision. Because of the way the writer of Acts has written his account of the events, the utter originality of Paul and his status as the founder of Christianity have thus been obscured; even though Paul is the hero and central character of the Book of Acts, his real status and role in the foundation of first century Gnostic Christianity are played down.**

**Answer for yourself: There is one problem that remains...do you know what it is?**

***The rift and split between Paul and the Jerusalem Apostles is indeed not entirely absent from the Book of Acts: it has been edited and disguised, but it is still there if you can recognize its signs and marks. The main aim of New Testament writers were to achieve an appearance of unity and continuity...an appearance of continuity that is false to the true historical record and is exposed as non-existent over and over again by extra-biblical accounts and other authentic Pauline Epistles...you just have not seen them yet or recognized the split in the context of other Pauline***

## PAUL'S SPECIAL REVELATION: THE "INCARNATION OF GOD IN HIS SONS & DAUGHTERS THE WORLD OVER...NEVER LIMITED TO BUT ONE PERSON

**If, however, we read Paul's own account of his revelation at Damascus without any presuppositions in our minds derived from the much later account in the Book of Acts, we can begin to appreciate what enormous claims Paul was making. We have already seen one instance in which the New English Bible translation has played down Paul's claims, but in**

**another phrase, this translation plays them down even more. For where the New English Bible has:**

***"God. . . chose to reveal his Son to me and through me" (Galatians 1:16), what the Greek actually says is "...to reveal his Son in me," as the Revised Version says.***

**Paul is saying, quite straightforwardly, that he is himself the incarnation of the Son of God. In truth, all of mankind is the incarnation of God's Son (or Daughter, depending on the sex of a person). He is thus claiming to have even higher status in his new religion than was claimed for Moses in Judaism and certainly for the Jerusalem Apostles themselves. It must be replied that Paul is here only claiming for himself what, in his view, is possible for every Christian: an identification and merging with the personality of Christ as divine saviour. Christ, it may be said, is "in every Christian," just as every Christian is "in Christ." But the same was said about Osiris thousands of years earlier by the Ancient Egyptians, where mankind awakened to the fact that he, when Spiritually awakened, is the risen Godman comparable to Osiris. This Spiritual knowledge was possessed in the beginning of mankind, long before the rise of the Jewish nation and again we find these same metaphysical ideas expressed by Paul in his "revelation" of the resurrected Jesus Christ. Paul's revelation is truly more than a revelation; it is a transformation and a deification of Paul himself as the supreme manifestation of the phenomenon of the incarnation and impregnation of God in matter, i.e., in mankind. Other Christians may be able to partake of this state, having been shown the way by St. Paul, just like other Buddhists may find Nirvana, and as other Egyptians were taught to "become Osiris."**

## PAUL'S DIVINE REVELATION DOES NOT END ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD

**Further confirmation of Paul's sense of his own uniqueness can be found in his letters. Thus, he claims that he has encountered a supreme mystical experience, quite apart from his Damascus revelation: that he was "caught up into the third heaven," and that he was "caught up into paradise and heard words so secret that human lips may not repeat them" (2 Corinthians 12:2-3). Even more important for an understanding of Paul's view of his own status is his claim to have special marks or stigmata on his body, showing the depth of his self-identification with the sufferings of Jesus on the cross (Galatians 6: 17). This phenomenon became common among ecstatic Christians in the Middle Ages, starting with Saint Francis, and has been much studied by psychologists. In the early Church, however, only Paul is known to have experienced such a physical manifestation. There are remarkable parallels, however, in other forms of ancient mystery religion. The devotees of Attis, for example, at the height of their ecstasy, castrated themselves in order to experience the same *agon* as their god, and so sink their individuality in his and become "in" him ("in Attis"). Thus the stigmata of Paul, whether self-inflicted or psychosomatically produced, made him, in his own eyes and those of his followers, the supreme embodiment of the power of the mystery god, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Here we must note the parallel between Paul and other mystagogues of the period, who also sought to found a new religion, based on their own embodiment of a divine power. Simon Magus is a good example. He is mentioned in Acts as having started a movement among the Samaritans, claiming to be "that power of God which is called 'The Great Power'". That Paul and Simon Magus were regarded widely as similar figures is shown by the fact that in certain anti-Pauline documents, Paul is referred to under the code-name "Simon Magus." This brings home to us that the picture of Paul found in the book of Acts as merely one of the Apostles, with no claim to a special doctrine of his own or to outstanding pre-eminence as the possessor of divine, mystical power, is untrue to the way in which Paul, as a historical fact, presented himself or was received and welcomed by others.**

## THE CLEVERNESS OF PAUL'S RELIGIOUS SYNTHESIS ...REVISITED

**Yet we must not forget the aspect that differentiated Paul from all the other mystagogues of the time and ensured that his religion, unlike theirs, was not forgotten. This was Paul's determination to connect his gospel of the indwelling Christ to Judaism and thus give it a historical basis going back in time to the beginning of the world - rather than basing it solely on his personal experience or his own personality. This was the feature that gave Paul's religion substance and impressiveness in the eyes of the Greco-Roman world, so that his followers felt themselves to be carried along in the sweep of cosmic history - though again, Paul was not unique in this harnessing of the Jewish Bible to his purposes, for this had been done by some of the Gnostic sects, particularly the Sethians as well as the Essenes. Paul's feeling for the Jewish Bible, which he had absorbed in its Greek translation and had studied avidly during his phase of ambition of Pharisaic eminence, can be seen even in the account quoted above of his Damascus revelation. Not only does he refer obliquely to Moses, as we have seen, but there is also a plain identification of himself with the prophet Jeremiah. He says:**

***". . . God, who had set me apart from birth and called me through his grace, chose to reveal his Son to me and through me. . . ."***

**Once more, the New English Bible has blurred the matter by its search for modern English idioms, rather than literal representation of the original. The literal translation, as in the Revised Version, is:**

## *". . . God, who separated me from my mother's womb"*

**...and this immediately recalls the summons to prophecy of Jeremiah:**

***"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).***

**Paul, too, declared himself to have a mission to the nations, but he wished this mission to have Biblical sanction, and he therefore described himself in terms derived from the Biblical prophet Jeremiah. We must remember this is coming from a man who had been ultimately rejected by both the Sadducees and the Pharisees. He was a man of crushed Spiritual ambition. Now he had a way that no one could question his "mission" since drawing upon Divine sanction!**

***In so far as Paul likens himself to Moses, he is thinking of himself as the expounder of the Ancient Wisdom for the emerging of the New Age of Pisces; but in so far as he likens himself to Jeremiah, he sees himself as the continuator of Judaism, even though his message is not for the Jews but for the whole world.***

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# THE NECESSARY ROLE OF PAUL'S EUCHARIST...IN HIS NEW RELIGION

## THE ORIGIN OF PAUL'S EUCHARIST..THE OSIRIAN SACRAMENT

**In the last article in this series we made note repeatedly of the concept of "being in Christ" and it's parallels from Egypt when the devotees and followers of Osiris were "in Osiris." Little has changed in 3500 years and Paul is proof of it. We noted earlier in this articles on other of our websites some of the ethical and ceremonial prerequisites for becoming an Osiris (similar to "being in Christ" as expressed by Paul). But none of these could avail at all without the miraculous power contained in the divine eucharist: there was power, there was power in the flesh and the blood of Osiris. He was the grain; and the bread made from it was the sacred food, the barley ale brewed from it the divine drink, literally believed to be the body and the blood of the god. Since the ancient Nilotics believed that human beings become whatever they eat, this Osirian sacrament was believed able to make them celestial and immortal. The doctrine of the eucharist has its ultimate roots in prehistoric cannibalism: it was universally believed among savages that by eating other human beings or gods, their virtues and powers would be absorbed by the eaters. Such cannibalism, common among African tribes until very recently and still practiced among the most primitive, had this primary objective. Melville describes the same sacerdotal rite among the south sea islanders (Cf. Typee XXXI). One of the oldest of the Pyramid Texts is that of Unas from the VIth Dynasty, cir. 2500 B. C. This is of great importance because it shows that the original ideology of Egypt had commingled with the Osirian concepts. Although he is ultimately given high place in heaven by order of Osiris, Unas is represented as being at first an enemy of the gods and his ancestors, whom he hunts, lassoes, kills, cooks, and eats so that their powers and attributes may become his own. It is obvious that at the time this was written, the eating of parents and gods was considered a most laudable ceremonial; and it emphasizes how difficult it must have been for the Osirian priesthood to stamp out the older cannibalism:**

***"The Akeru gods tremble, the Kenemu whirl, when they see Unas a risen Soul, in the form of a god who lives upon his fathers and feeds upon his mothers.... He eats men, he feeds on the gods . . . he cooks them in his fiery cauldrons. He eats their words of power, he swallows their spirits. . . What he finds on his path, he eats eagerly.... He eats the wisdom of every god, his period of life is eternity. . . Their soul is in his body, their spirits are within him."***

**Having partaken of this dynamic sacrament, Unas becomes an Osiris and is admitted to the company of the gods.**

**A parallel passage is found in the Pyramid Text of Pepi II, who, it is said"**

***"seizeth those who are in the following of Set . . . he breaketh their heads, he cutteth off their haunches, he teareth out their intestines, he diggeth out their hearts, he drinketh copiously of their blood!' (Line 531 ff.).***

**Although crude, savage, and grotesque, this was the core of an overwhelming concept. The conviction that it was possible for humanity to achieve immortality by eating the body and drinking the blood of a god or of an immortal god-man who had died that mortals might have abundant and everlasting life, became a dominating obsession in the ancient world. The cult of Osiris forbade the older cannibalism, but did not proscribe the dismemberment and eating of enemies; and it certainly practiced the bloody sacrifice of captives and the sacramental rending and eating of the sacred bovine, which symbolized Osiris (The Book of the Dead, CLXXXI). The moral elevation of the Osirian cult lay in its identification of bread with the flesh of its god and of barley ale with his blood. The partaker of this eucharist could now achieve a mystical transformation and become an Osiris by living on wheat and barley bread during his lifetime, by drinking and eating the sacred ale and cakes during the annual mysteries, and by enjoying the same sacred fare in Sekhet-Aaru once his Khu had joined his Sahu in the next world. By this simple metaphysical transposition, the bloody sacrament became symbolic, but no less effective.**

**Now please pay close attention and "think" when reading the next item. For Osiris was, to his believers, literally and with complete reality, the divine seed which came down from heaven and was reborn from the earth that men might have life and have it more abundantly; and all who ate of that bread might live forever, for it was the flesh of the god, which he gave for the life of humanity. Whosoever ate the flesh and drank the blood of Osiris had eternal life; for he would be resurrected beyond the grave. Whosoever ate that flesh and drank that blood dwelt in Osiris and Osiris dwelt in him. This was the divine mystery which was given to the world by Egypt and which spread throughout the Mediterranean area in various cults; this concept originated only once, but it proliferated in all directions and became the dynamic force in every mystery-cult. It was solely by means of this sacramental food that the corruptible of the deceased could be clothed with incorruption. This idea appears again and again in infinite variety. Paul uses this " idea" in selling his Jewish "revelation" to the Gentile world; notice as I said earlier, that he does hot have to change anything when presenting his version of this "g-dman" and "his eucharist to the Gentiles...they already believed in solar/astral g-dmen who came drown from heaven in 'virgin births' and already were partakers in their 'mysteries' where their body and blood were 'eaten' in the forms of the suppers of their g-dmen.**

**The scribe Nebseni implores: "And there in the celestial mansions of heaven which my divine father Tem hath established, let my hands lay hold upon the wheat and the barley which shall be given unto me therein in abundant measure." This was the celestial eucharist without which the Sahu itself, the spiritual body, could not germinate from the mummy. Nu corroborates this fact by stating: "I am established, and the divine Sekhethetep is before me, I have eaten therein, I have become a spirit therein, I have abundance therein." Again he declares; "I am the divine soul of Ra . . . which is god. . . I am the divine food which is not corrupted." Nu identifies himself with Osiris and with Ra, who is called the divine, that is, the sacramental food. As we know, Horus, the Son of the Godman Osiris, who comes from an immaculate conception no less, was also frequently identified with his father; and we read: "Horus is both the divine food and the sacrifice." We read that the bread and the ale of Osiris make the eater immortal, (The Book of the Dead, 40) an idea which is frequently elaborated. The Osirian "shall eat of that wheat and barley, and his limbs shall be nourished therewith, and his body shall become like unto the bodies of the g-ds" (The Book of the Dead, XCIX). That the sacramental food which gave immortality was a very ancient concept we learn from the Pyramid Text of Teta, which dates from about, 2600 B. C. and which embodies ideas far more ancient still. We read here that the Osiris Teta "receives" thy bread which decayeth not, and thy beer which perisheth not." In the Text of Pepi I we read:**

***"All the g-ds give thee their flesh and their blood.... Thou shalt not die."***

**In the Text of Pepi II, the aspirant prays for "thy bread of eternity, and thy beer of everlastingness (Line 390).**

## THE G-D-MAN OSIRIS - PAUL'S PROTOTYPE

**Such was the great g-dman Osiris: human, like us, and thus able to take upon himself all our sorrow, but also divine, and therefore able to confer divinity upon us. He brought the divine bread from heaven for mankind; he taught justice and practiced mercy; he died, was buried, and rose from the grave; he gave to all who became members of his mystical body his flesh to eat and his blood to drink so that this divine sacrament might then transfigure them into celestial g-ds; he went before to prepare mansions for his initiates in Elysium (our concept of Heaven); and he was to be the just and merciful judge before whom men and women must appear beyond the grave.**

**The Eucharist signifies the mystical incorporation of the initiate into the g-dhead by eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ (just another in a long line of Osiris proto-types). Such a ceremony implies the deification of Jesus and is quite impossible to reconcile with a view of Jesus as merely a Messiah in the Jewish sense. Moreover, the Eucharist, as well as implying a doctrine of participation in the g-dhead, implies a doctrine of the sacrifice of Jesus as an atonement for mankind; the worshipper partakes of the body of the sacrificed Jesus much as the Jewish worshippers used to eat the Paschal lamb (to which Jesus is likened in I Corinthians 5:7....sacrificed just like Osiris for his followers). Such a concept of the death of Jesus cannot be reconciled with any variety of Judaism, for it amounts to the reinstatement of human sacrifice, which for Judaism was anathema! Indeed a large part of the Hebrew Bible constitutes a campaign against human sacrifice. The institution of animal sacrifice was understood to entail the complete supersession of human sacrifice; and the story of the akedah or Binding of Isaac in which God finally renounces human sacrifice in favor of animal sacrifice is the validating myth of this advance.**

**While it is true that the idea of vicarious atonement is not wholly alien to Judaism, as pointed out earlier, it is peripheral and forms no part of the main pattern of salvation. The story may be told in the midrash that Rabbi Judah's sufferings ensured good harvests (Genesis Rabbah 33), but this does not mean that the average Jew was encouraged to lay his burden of sin upon Rabbi Judah or other such figures and abandon his own individual struggle against the evil inclination by the guidance of the Torah. Even the story in the Bible about Moses's offer to sacrifice himself for the Israelites is a peripheral narrative device, heightening the character of Moses as a lover of Israel, rather than pointing a way to salvation. In any case, Moses's offer is immediately refused by God in terms that reinforce the usual pattern of individual responsibility: "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book'" (Exodus 32: 33). The implication of the Eucharist that salvation is to be obtained through faith in Jesus' death and the shedding of his blood is thus a radical departure from Judaism and a return to pagan concepts of atonement. Thus we see the "Eucharist" as the Catholic equivalent of the Protestant's "Communion." This "sacrament" originated in Egypt and spread thought the know world and offered a form of salvation to its partakers. Paul picks up this concept and advances it with Jewish overtones to his "converts." Thus, again we see that it was Paul and not Jesus who was the founder of a faith that has as its core not the Passover, but the supper of their Godman....Christianity.**

## BUT JESUS IS GIVEN CREDIT FOR THE EUCHARIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT....HOW CAN THIS BE?

**Equally relevant is the fact that the Eucharist, as the basic sacrament of Christianity, marks it off from Judaism as a separate religion. If Jesus instituted the Eucharist, then he was founding a new religion thereby, if only in the institutional sense of providing a central ceremony not contained in Judaism and taking the place of the Jewish sacraments of the Temple or (in the absence of the Temple) of the Shema, the affirmation of the unity of God, which forms the central act of**

**Jewish worship. The institution of the Lord's Prayer by Jesus, as pointed out before, did not constitute any such radical departure from Jewish practice, for it was quite usual for rabbis of the Pharisaic movement to compose some personal prayer, for the use of themselves and their immediate disciples, which would be used in addition to the normal prayers. A number of such prayers have been preserved in the Talmud, and some of them have actually been incorporated into the Jewish Prayer Book and are used by all Jews today. It was only when the Lord's Prayer, after the death of Jesus, was made into a central feature of the daily service, instead of being added to the normal Jewish prayers, that it became a specifically Christian observance; for in itself, it contains nothing contrary to Judaism, and is indeed a characteristically Jewish prayer.**

**In the Gospels, certain familiar texts portray Jesus as founding the Eucharist. The earliest of these is in Mark:**

***"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, 'This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many'" (Mark 14:22-24).***

**Matthew and Luke give the same account, with some small variations. This account forms part of the story of the Last Supper.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you ever notice that the Gospel of John explains the Eucharist completely different than the Synoptic Gospels?**

**John, however, strangely enough, does not mention this incident in his account of the Last Supper, but instead attaches the Eucharistic idea to a quite different phase of Jesus' life, his preaching in Galilee in the Capernaum synagogue:**

***Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. (John 6: 53-58)***

**Please notice the conflicting origin for Jesus' supposed introduction of the Eucharist:**

**In the Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew and Luke), Jesus is represented as performing a ceremony (distributing bread and wine to his disciples), but not as instituting a rite to be observed by his followers in perpetuity. It is left to the reader to surmise that this story provides a historical origin for the rite of the Eucharist as practised in the Christian Church. In John, on the other hand, Jesus does not even perform a ceremony: he merely expresses some ideas, dark and cryptic even to his disciples, some of whom are alienated by them (John 6: 66).**

**Answer for yourself: Does this blatant contradiction as to the origin of the Eucharist by Jesus possibly indicate that he had nothing to do with such an idea and the writing of this "account" in various ways were the later attempts of the Gospel writers to tie its origin to Jesus and not Paul, thereby giving greater credibility to the sacrament if it could be shown to have originated with Jesus instead of Paul? Without a doubt!**

**Answer for yourself: Could the Jew's rejection of Jesus' supposed offer to "eat his flesh and drink his blood" be historically accurate to the overwhelming Jewish lack of acceptance of Paul's Eucharist and it's implied meaning among the Jews? Without a doubt, but the attempt and connection had to be made in order to tie it to**

**Jesus. The accounts of trying to tie it to Jesus are not the same; again showing the mark of man's creativity and not God's!**

**Answer for yourself: Where, then, do we find the first expression of the notion that Jesus actually instituted the Eucharistic rite as a regular sacrament in the Christian Church? Well we do not find it an any writings that can accurately shown to be written by Jewish hands; we have to go to the Gentile convert Paul again for this! I hope you don't forget that since a child Paul would have been impressed by the mystery of such a saving sacrament that was the center of Gentile religion; like Tarsus for example where he grew up.**

**The earliest assertion of the institution of this Osirian sacrament/Eucharist within Judaism is to be found in Paul's Epistles, and this is indeed the earliest reference to the Eucharistic idea too, i.e. to the idea that there is salvific power in the body and blood of Jesus...just as we saw was identical to Osiris:**

***For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (I Corinthians 2: 23-30)***

**From this passage, it is abundantly clear that Paul himself was the inventor and creator of the Eucharist, both as an idea and as a Church institution. For Paul says quite plainly that the Eucharist was founded on a revelation which he himself received:**

## *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you."*

**The fact that Paul says here that he received directly "from the Lord" (i.e. by direct revelation from Jesus himself, in one of the many appearances which Paul claims occurred to him) the details of how Jesus instituted the Eucharist (or what Paul calls "the Lord's Supper", verse 20), has been glossed over by scholars in a manner that might be considered extraordinary; but it is really quite understandable, for there is a great deal at stake here. To admit that Paul was the creator of the Eucharist would be to admit that Paul, not Jesus, was the founder of Christianity. It means that the central sacrament and mystery of Christianity, which marks it off as a separate religion from Judaism, was not instituted by Jesus. Nor are the ideas underlying this sacrament - the incorporation of the worshippers in the body of the divine Christ by a process of eating the god ?-part of Jesus' religious outlook: indeed, he would have found such ideas repugnant, though not unfamiliar, for they were a well-known aspect of paganism, especially in its mystery religion manifestations.**

**Even Christian scholars, however, have not been able to hide from themselves completely that Paul is here claiming to have received by revelation from Jesus personally how, at the Last Supper, Jesus gave instructions about the institution of the Eucharist. A typical comment is the following: "Perhaps St Paul means that he received this information by revelation, though the preposition apo (from) rather suggests his having received it from the Lord through the elder apostles or other intermediaries" (Evans, Corinthians, Clarendon Bible, 1930). While allowing that it is possible that Paul is here claiming a revelation (though without admitting how momentous such an interpretation would be, or why it has to be fended off so desperately), this scholar takes**

**refuge in a grammatical comment of little weight (Maccoby, Mythmaker, p. 113).**

We must accept, then, that Paul is saying here that he knows about Jesus' words at the Last Supper by direct revelation, not by any information received from the Jerusalem Apostles, some of whom were actually at the Last Supper. It would obviously be absurd for Paul to ascribe to an exclusive revelation of his own an institution already well known in the Church since the days of Jesus himself. This explains the otherwise inexplicable fact that, as we shall see, the Eucharist was not observed by the "Jerusalem Church" at all, but only by those churches that had come under the influence of Paul. For if Jesus himself had instituted the Eucharist, one would expect it to be observed, above all, by those who were actually present at the Last Supper - unless they had unaccountably forgotten Jesus' words, and needed to be reminded of them through a special revelation given to Paul.

The Gospels, of course, do assert that the Eucharist was instituted by Jesus - or, at least, that as an institution it was based on something that Jesus did and said at the Last Supper. But we must remind ourselves, once more, that the Gospels were all written after Paul's Epistles, and were all influenced by Paul's ideas. Coupled with this fact is the scholars who today point out the fact that the Gospels bearing the Apostles' names were written quite late; much later than Church traditions reports and the hand of the authors of these Gospels were not the Jewish Apostles but non-Jews due to the innumerable internal evidences of errors which no 5 years old Jewish child would have made let alone the Holy Spirit. **Of course, there is much in the Gospels that is not derived from Paul, especially in relation to Jesus' earthly life, in which Paul did not take much interest. But here is one alleged incident in Jesus' life about which, for once, there is a close correspondence between something in Paul's Epistles and the account of the Gospels. It is significant that this one incident concerns an institution so central for the Christian Church, which had a strong motive to ascribe its institution to Jesus, since otherwise it would have to admit that Jesus had no intention of founding a new religion at all. We are forced to the conclusion that the source from which the Gospels derive their account of the Last Supper, in its Eucharistic aspects, is, in fact, Paul's account of his revelation on the matter in Corinthians.**

**The Gospels, in general, have other sources for their accounts of Jesus' last days. But the Gospel-writers, being members of a Church in which the Eucharist was already centrally important (Gentile churches), and having no other source for the institution of the Eucharist than Paul's account, had to turn away from their usual sources and draw on Paul directly in order to write into the story something corresponding to what Paul alleged to have seen in his vision of the Last Supper.** This explains the numerous verbal correspondences between the accounts given in the Synoptic Gospels and Paul's words in Corinthians. These cannot be a coincidence, but must mean that the Gospel authors had Paul's words before them as they wrote (they cannot be from a common source, since Paul says explicitly that he did not have them from any source but by personal revelation).

**Though the Synoptic Gospels follow the outline of Paul's account closely, they do not go as far as Paul in ascribing to Jesus the actual institution of the Eucharistic rite; instead they portray Jesus as performing a ceremony which was afterwards made the basis of the Eucharistic rite. The absence of the whole incident in their other sources must have embarrassed the Synoptic writers to the extent that they inserted only a pared down version of Paul's visionary incident.**

The author of John, on the other hand, omitted the incident altogether from his account of the Last Supper.

**Answer for yourself: How could this be if Jesus instituted such an important sacrament?**

This "omission" was certainly not because he was indifferent to the Eucharist, for, in another context, he gives a much longer and more impassioned version of its theory than is found in any of the Synoptic Gospels, making it essential to the attainment of eternal life, and evidently regarding it as a mystery of incorporation with the divine just as in the mystery cults. His omission of the topic

**from the Last Supper must mean that he was unacquainted with the Epistle of Paul in which the topic was attached to the Last Supper for the first time.**

**Answer for yourself: How could this be if Jesus instituted such an important sacrament at the Last Supper and he was writing under the unction of the Holy Spirit; or was he?**

**Nevertheless, as a member of a Church in which the practice of the Eucharist was regarded as essential for salvation (though unaware that this doctrine came from Paul), he included a long defence of the institution as part of Jesus' preaching. Thus all the Gospels provide some kind of basis in Jesus' life for the Eucharistic rite of which Jesus, in historical fact, knew nothing.**

**John shows himself well aware of the shocking character of the Eucharistic idea in Jewish eyes when he portrays even the disciples as offended by it, and some of them as so alienated that "they walked no more with him". What John is describing here is not the shock felt by Jewish hearers of Jesus (for Jesus never expressed any Eucharistic ideas) but the shock felt by hearers of Paul when he grafted on to the practice of Christianity a rite so reminiscent of paganism, involving a notion of incorporation of the g-dhead by a procedure with strong overtones of cannibalism.**

## PASSOVER OR PAUL'S OSIRIS RITUAL..NOW CALLED THE LORD'S SUPPER?

**This is not to say, of course, that Jesus did not distribute bread and wine to his disciples at the Last Supper...which was simply a Passover Seder! This was quite normal at a Jewish meal, whether at festival time or not. The leading person at the table would make a blessing (blessing is the original meaning of the word "eucharist") and then break the loaf of bread and pass a piece to everyone at the table. This cup of wine seems to be what is referred to in the Synoptic accounts and in I Corinthians, and speaks of the kiddush wine of sabbath and festivals, which preceded the bread and certain parts of the seder. This procedure, which is still practised today at Jewish tables, has no mystical significance; the only meaning of it is to thank God for the meal He has provided. The addition of mystery religion trappings (i.e. the bread as the body of the god, and the wine as his blood) was the work of Paul, by which he turned an ordinary Jewish meal into a pagan sacrament. Since the blood even of an animal was forbidden at a Jewish meal by biblical law (Leviticus 7:26), the idea of regarding the wine as blood would be found disgusting by Jews. Here again, Paul seems to be deliberately removing himself from the Jewish ethos and canons of taste, and aligning himself with the world of paganism.**

**It is worthy of note that the term Paul uses for the Eucharist is "the Lord's Supper" (Greek kuriakon deipnon). This same expression was used in the mystery religions for the sacred meals dedicated to the saviour god. There is evidence that in the early Gentile Church, this ceremony was indeed regarded as a mystery, for an atmosphere of secrecy surrounded it, and non-Christians and even catechumens (those being inducted into Gentile Christianity) were not allowed to witness it. Paul's expression "the Lord's Supper" was so redolent of mystery religion that the early Fathers of the Church became embarrassed by it, and they substituted for it the name "Eucharist", which had Jewish, rather than pagan, associations. Thus the Fathers sought to align the Christian ceremony with the non-mystical, non-magical kiddush of the Jews, in which the wine and the bread were "blessed" (or, more accurately, God was blessed for providing them). Despite this change of name, however, the Eucharist continued to have magical associations, since it was believed that a miracle occurred every time it was celebrated: the bread and wine turned into the body and blood of Christ. This magical significance existed from the first institution of the rite by Paul, as can be seen from his expressions concerning the magical effect of the proper performance of it:**

***"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and***

*sickly among you, and many sleep."*

Nevertheless, even Paul had no wish to cut off his new religion, with its new rite of communion, from Judaism entirely. To do that would strip any authority he could have from the Jerusalem church which was promoted as the authorities who backed Paul's mission (when in reality they had strong reservations concerning it). Even though he gave authority to the new rite by a vision, it was not his own authority that he cited, but that of Jesus. He would thus have approved of the effort later put into the Gospels and Acts to derive Paul's doctrines, including the Eucharist, from Jesus, and thus to play down the role of Paul himself. Paul had no wish to be acclaimed as the founder of a new religion; on the contrary, he wished his doctrines to be accepted as the logical continuation of Judaism, and therefore to have the backing of the whole panoply of history contained in the Jewish scriptures. Consequently, even in his institution of the Eucharist, he seeks to stress biblical antecedents. Thus he relates the sacrifice of the Eucharist and the eating of the body and blood of Christ to the sacrifices of the Temple (1 Corinthians 10: 18), and the imbibing of Christ's blood to the imbibing of miraculous water by the Israelites in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10: 4). By surrounding what was, in fact, an audaciously pagan ceremony with a web of scriptural allusions, Paul hoped to attach his cult of Jesus as a saviour-god to the Jewish background which he still cherished as a convert and in which he had aspired to reach great heights. In this way he could think of himself as a prophet, like Jeremiah. He had not broken from the Pharisees whom he had hoped to conquer through his gifts; instead, he had transcended them, and so conquered them in a different way. His abject failure had been turned into triumph. The Gamaliels and Hillels on whom his youthful admiration had been bestowed were now small fry: mere shadows of the prophets, among whom Paul took his place. If the Pharisees now wished to achieve any eminence, they could do so only by attaching themselves to him, and seeking salvation by the route which only he could show.

## DID THE JERUSALEM APOSTLES AND MOTHER CHURCH PARTAKE OF PAUL'S EUCHARIST?

It remains to demonstrate that the Eucharist ceremony was **not** practised by Jesus' followers in Jerusalem, who were led by the disciples of Jesus himself, who would surely have known whether Jesus had given them this new foundation rite.

**As the celebrated scholar Hans Lietzmann indicated long ago, the evidence of the book of Acts points to the conclusion that the Eucharist was not practised by the Jerusalem Nazarenes. Instead, a sense of community was instilled simply by having communal meals, as in the case of other Jewish fellowships. Thus, we find the following:**

***"They met constantly to hear the apostles teach, and to share the common life, to break bread, and to pray. . . . With one mind they kept up their daily attendance at the temple, and, breaking bread in private houses, shared their meals with unaffected joy, as they praised God and enjoyed the favor of the whole people" (Acts 2:42-46).***

**The expression "to break bread" (Hebrew betzo'a) simply means to initiate a meal in a ceremonious way; the host or some prominent guest makes a blessing over a loaf of bread and then breaks the loaf, giving a piece to each person present. This was done (and still is done) by Jews at all communal or celebratory meals, whether on a week day or a festival day,** and nothing is said to suggest that the bread has any symbolic or mystical

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**significance.**

**If these communal meals of Jesus' followers in Jerusalem had had a Eucharistic character (i.e. if they were sacraments with a mystical significance of eating the body and drinking the blood of Jesus), something would surely have been included to indicate this: at the very least, the wine would have been mentioned, which it is not. It may be asked why Luke, who did not scruple to include in his Gospel a Eucharistic element in his account of the Last Supper, did not venture to give a Eucharistic coloring to his account of the communal meals in Acts. Luke himself must have been familiar with Eucharistic practice, since at the time of the writing of Acts (about AD 90), the Eucharist was an established rite of the Church. Yet he did not think of inserting into his account of the practices of the "Jerusalem Church" that they performed the Eucharist. This is merely an example of how difficult it is to rewrite history without leaving tell-tale traces of the original story. One alteration always implies others; but the redactor does not always think of the repercussions of an alteration he has inserted, and so leaves other parts of his work unaltered and inconsistent with his pattern of adaptation of the original.**

***A survey of the evidence thus confirms that Paul and no one else was the creator of the Eucharist.***

**He gave authority to this new institution, which he actually derived from mystery religion, by adducing a vision in which he had seen Jesus at the Last Supper, giving instructions to his disciples about performing the Eucharistic rite. This vision of Paul's was later incorporated as historical fact into the Gospels, in the Gentile written accounts given there of the Last Supper, and thus has been accepted as historical fact by the vast majority, but not all, of New Testament scholars. The followers of Jesus in Jerusalem, who were pious Jews and would have regarded the idea of eating Jesus' body and drinking his blood as repugnant, never practised this rite, but simply took communal meals prefaced by the breaking of bread, in the manner sanctioned by Jewish tradition for fellowships within the general community of Judaism.**

**There is no need to go on. I will leave you with a thought from a real Prophet of God and not a rejected Sadducee/Pharisee want to be:**

***Jer 10:2 2 Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. (KJV)***

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# DOES THE JERUSALEM CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS DISCOUNT PAUL'S GOSPEL AND THEOLOGY?

**Wow! What a question to start this article.**

**Answer for yourself: What would you do if you found, after reading this article, that with proper understanding of what you read in the Book of Acts concerning the Jerusalem church and their continued actions following Jesus' death, that Paul's theology concerning Jesus was only unique to himself and never accepted by those who knew Jesus best?**

**Well that is what you will find it you have the courage to read this article completely and have your thinking cap on. Let us begin as we come to the truth concerning the Jewish Jesus....a Jesus that never interested Paul.**

## WAS THE TORAH AND THE LAW ABOLISHED FOR THE JEWISH FOLLOWERS OF JESUS AFTER HIS DEATH?

Any cursory reading of the book of Acts will reveal to the reader the fact that the Nazarenes of Jerusalem, in the days and years immediately following the death of Jesus and up to the destruction of the Temple, consisted of observant Jews, for whom the Torah was still in force.

**Answer for yourself: How do we know the above statement is true?**

**For example, we are told that:**

***"they kept up their daily attendance at the Temple" (Acts 2: 46).***

**First of all understand that the followers of Jesus never quit honoring the Temple or attending the Temple and it's services.** Evidently, then, Jesus' followers regarded the service of the Temple as still valid, with its meat and vegetable offerings, its Holy of Holies, its golden table for the shewbread, and its *menorah* or candelabra with its seven branches symbolizing the seven planets. All these were continued to be venerated by the followers of Jesus after his death and they made no effort to set up a central place of worship of their own in rivalry to the Temple. Also, their acceptance of Temple worship implied an acceptance of the Aaronic priesthood who administered the Temple and the sin offerings and atonement offerings that were continually bought on a daily basis.

**Answer for yourself: How do we know that James and Paul continued to bring "sin offerings" and "blood sacrifices" following the death of Jesus' and continued to do so up until the Roman destruction of the Temple? Well we only have to look at Acts 21 where James commands Paul to "keep" a vow publicly and he obliges.**

**This is called the "Nazarite Vow" and one only needs to read Numbers chapter 6 in depth to see that "sin offerings" and "blood atonements" were part of this vow. Make note please that this "conduct" reflects "religious beliefs;" not only held by James and the Jerusalem Church and those who knew Jesus best, but was even submitted to by Paul who had been teaching doctrines to Jews and Gentiles contrary to the beliefs of James and the Jerusalem Church. Paul was here "forced" to do right or be exposed in public as a fraud! Let us not forget the charges:**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee (Paul), that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)***

**Let us be focused on this one fact as seen by the vow commanded of Paul by James: This vow required "atonement offerings" & "blood sacrifices as sin offering" [see Num. 6] & and this was 30 plus years after Jesus' supposed sacrificial death ("sacrificial" only to Paul if we can believe the actions of James and the Jerusalem Church).**

**Answer for yourself: Did the Holy Spirit fail to tell James and the Jerusalem church that Jesus' death was the final sacrifice for all sins, or does their actions, as recorded and properly understood in Acts 21, reveal to us that they never accepted Paul's neo-pagan gospel of dying godmen which he applied to Jesus when among the Gentiles? Evidently they didn't!**

**As if that was not enough:**

***Acts 21:20 20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: (KJV)***

**What we find again is that the example of James and the Jersualem Church where they boast of the fact that Jews were repenting in preparation of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven and they were returning to Moses and the Law (the Torah).**

## THE JERUSALEM CHURCH...A BREAKAWAY MOVEMENT FROM JUDAISM...OR SIMPLE MESSIANIC JUDAISM?

**Answer for yourself: Did James and the first congregation of followers of Jesus understand that they were called to start a "new movement" that was to replace Biblical Judaism, or did they see that they were called to repentance and a return to "the" faith once given to the Saints in the beginning by God...which was Biblical Judaism in the first place (Ethical Monotheism)?**

**The answer to the above question is hotly debated today among Seminarians as well as would-be "authorities." You can find answers on both sides of the question so we must turn to the evidence that exists in order to see "the picture" of the movement that was originally the first followers of Jesus. Let me also make mention that these "first followers of Jesus" surely knew him best. I find it preposterous to think that Gentiles of the 2nd thru the 5th century are in a better position than these first followers of Jesus to tell the world about him. And as if that was not enough the idea that those who knew Jesus best, in response to Jesus' Great Commision, "got it wrong" is unbelievable. If that was the case then there is no hope of understanding what the truth really is or was. I have a hard time believing, and this is subjective, that those who knew and followed and listened to Jesus' every word for 3 years or more and who had received the Holy Spirit when Jesus "breathed" on them and later at "Pentecost" went out and did it wrong.**

**Our task is to study to the point where we can get a good picture of First Century Judaism and it's religious beliefs and find Jesus' place within it. Only then, once this is accomplished, can we accurately understand the New Testament; which parts in it that are truthful and those that are not. Once this is accomplished the remaining task is to understand how the non-Jew related to such religious revelation of Israel and take our rightful place in the Israel of God...and not try to replace it with a new religion of Gentile origins.**

**Though Jesus' movement within Judaism had a system of leadership of its own, this was not a rival priesthood that was intended to replace the Aaronic Priesthood. Every Jewish movement, including the Pharisees, had its internal system of leadership (e.g. the rabbis), but this was in addition to the priesthood of the Temple, not instead of them. It was not until the Christian Church proper was set up, under the influence of Pauline ideas, that a rival priesthood was instituted, with priestly vestments patterned partly on Jewish and partly on pagan models, and with sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, intended to supersede the sacraments of the Jewish Temple. Indeed, the Christian Church produced a proliferation of temples, for, while in Judaism only one sacramental centre was allowed, i.e. the Jerusalem Temple, in Christianity every church was a centre for sacramental rites, while the vast cathedrals reached an ornateness undreamt of even in the Jewish Temple, much less in the simple conventicles or synagogues in which ordinary prayer and study took place. Additionally, the new priesthood instituted in the Pauline Christian Church was accorded an awesome authority which the Jewish priesthood never enjoyed, since the latter were regarded as mere functionaries with no authority to pronounce on matters of religious practice or ethics, or to perform absolutions or excommunications.**

**At the time of the Jerusalem Apostles, who were the companions of Jesus himself and continued his work, no such developments were in sight. The Apostles showed by their attendance at the Temple that they did not claim priestly status for themselves. Also, they and their followers attended the synagogues for normal Jewish daily worship. This is shown by the easy access of the preachers of Jesus' movement, including Paul, to synagogues at all times; even the alleged prophecy included in John that "they shall put you out of the synagogues" (John 16:2) shows that Jesus' followers, in the early days, were accepted as attenders at the synagogue and also that they were themselves quite willing to attend the synagogues. Of course, this does not mean that they had no meeting places of their own; but these meeting places were themselves synagogues, and did not differ in kind from the various synagogues which catered for specialized groups of Jews, e.g. for Jews who came from the same area of the Diaspora (for example, Acts 6:9: "the Synagogue of Freedmen, comprising Cyrenians and Alexandrians and people from Cilicia and Asia. . . ."). This type of synagogue for Jews of similar interests or background exists today, even in Israel. The followers of Jesus thus formed a separate group, but by no means a Church; religiously, it was an integral part of Jewry. The expression "the Jerusalem Church" is thus, at this stage, a misnomer.**

**Now this immediately constitutes a difficulty for the conventional Christian believer, for the Gospels say quite distinctly that Jesus founded a Church.**

**Answer for yourself: Why, then, did the Apostles of Jerusalem act as if no Church had been founded by their continual attendance, support, and participation in Temple sacrifices as well as frequenting the synagogues? Does this behavior rather say to us that they never departed from Judaism even with their beliefs in Jesus as Messiah? It sure would seem that to the cautious observer.**

# COMING TO A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND ITS LEADERSHIP

**Answer for yourself: If Jesus, as the Gospels say, chose Peter as the leader of the Church, why were the Nazarenes, after Jesus' death, led not by Peter, but by James, the brother of Jesus, a person who is not even mentioned in the Gospels as a follower of Jesus in his lifetime?**

**This is the kind of contradiction that, if logically considered, can lead us to the true picture of the**

history of Jesus' movement in Jerusalem, as opposed to the picture which the later Gentile Church wished to propagate. We shall also be able to understand much better the nature of the conflict which broke out between the Jerusalem "church" and Paul.

**In Matthew, we find the following account of Peter's election:**

***Matt 16:15-19 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Why is this passage, which is in only one account of the life of Jesus in the New Testament, of major importance?**

This account, which appears only in the Gospel of Matthew, was combined with a second-century legend locating Peter's death in Rome to provide support for the claim of the Roman Catholic Church to supremacy over Christendom. Peter was conceived to have been the first Bishop of Rome or Pope and, since Peter had been declared by Jesus to be the rock on which the Church was to be built, this made Rome the centre of Christendom, and the papal succession the true hierarchy founded by Jesus himself.

**With the above thought in your minds....read the following:**

***Isa 2:3 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (KJV)***

***Zech 8:22-23 and to pray before the LORD. 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Can you envisage any reason why Jesus would declare Rome, the same nation that was brutalizing his people and had been for over 70 years, to be the center of his future movement in light of the Prophets who had for thousands of years predicted Zion, Jerusalem, to be the center for religious education for the Gentile nations?**

**If one seriously believes the Prophets, the Bible that Jesus read, then he sees through this "political-religious" creationism in Matthew (whom scholars today will teach us was written by non-Jewish authors in the first place)!**

**Answer for yourself: What kind of Messiah would Jesus be if he was to set and rule from Rome instead of Jerusalem (THINK)?**

This is, of course, mere power politics and not to be taken seriously as historical fact. To Jesus, a Jew, the idea that his teaching would have its administrative centre at Rome, the capital of the military power against which his whole life was directed, would have seemed astonishing and dismaying.

**Answer for yourself: But to return to historical realities, what was the relationship between Peter, evidently the leader of the Apostles during Jesus' lifetime, and James, the brother of Jesus? Why was it that Peter did not become the unchallenged leader of the movement after the death of Jesus?**

**To understand this, we must remind ourselves of what Jesus really was. He was not the founder of a Church, but a claimant to a throne. When Peter, as recorded in the passage cited above, hailed Jesus as "Messiahμ, he was using this word in its Jewish sense, not in the sense it acquired later in the Christian Church. In other words, Peter was hailing Jesus as King of Israel. Jesus' response was to give Peter his title of "Rock" and to tell him that he would have "the keys of the kingdom of Heaven". The meaning of this phrase, in its Jewish context, is quite different from what later Christian mythology made of it, when it pictured Saint Peter standing at the gate of Heaven, holding the keys, and deciding which souls might enter. The "kingdom of Heaven" is the same as the "kingdom of God" (since "Heaven" was used in Hebrew as a title of God), and the reference is not to some paradise in the great beyond, but to the Messianic kingdom on Earth, of which Jesus had just allowed himself to be proclaimed King - i.e. the Jewish kingdom, of which the Davidic monarch was constitutional ruler, while God was the only real King.**

**By giving Peter the "keys of the kingdom," Jesus was appointing him to be his chief minister. King Hezekiah's chief minister was called Shebna; and when the prophet Isaiah predicted that this official would he dismissed in favor of Eliakim, he did so in the following terms:**

***And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down. And it shall come to pass in that clay, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, (Isaiah 22: 19-23)***

**The similarities between this and Jesusμ charge to Peter are striking. Where Eliakim is given the key of the house of David, Peter is given the keys of the Messianic kingdom; where Eliakim is told that "he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open," Peter is told, in effect, that he shall bind and none shall loose, and he shall loose and none shall bind. The New English Bible destroys the immediacy of the original by its concern for idiomatic English, turning the "bind" and "loose" of the Authorized Version and Revised Version into "forbid" and "allow".) The terms to "bind" and to "loose" are used in the rabbinical literature as the powers of the Sanhedrin and other rabbinical courts, so that .Jesus by giving Peter these powers is appointing him not only chief minister at his royal court but also head of the Sanhedrin; this is the only difference between the appointment of Eliakim and that of Peter. This is perhaps the reason why Jesus gives Peter the "keys" in the plural.**

**Peter, then, is appointed chief minister of King Jesus. This explains fully the relationship between Peter and James, the brother of Jesus, in the movement, and why James suddenly rises to prominence at this point. When Jesus became King, his family became the royal family, at least for those who believed in Jesus' claim to the Messiahship. Thus, after Jesus' death, his brother James, as his nearest relative, became his successor; not in the sense that he became King James, for Jesus was believed to be alive, having been resurrected by a miracle of God, and to be waiting in the wings for the correct moment to return to the stage as Messianic King. James was thus a Prince Regent, occupying the throne temporarily in the absence of Jesus.**

**Further proof that this was the situation can be derived from what is known about other members of Jesus' family. After James, Jesus' brother, was executed by the High Priest, the Sadducee Ananus, in AD 62, he was succeeded by another member of Jesus' family, Simeon, son of Cleophas, who was Jesus' cousin. This again shows that the structure of the "Jerusalem Church" was monarchical, rather than ecclesiastical. Moreover, there is evidence that the Romans saw the matter in this light,**

for they issued decrees against all descendants of the house of David, ordering them to be arrested; and Simeon, son of Cleophas, was eventually executed by the Romans as a pretender to the throne of David.

The position of Peter, then, after the death of Jesus, is thus easily understood. He could not become the leader of the Jesus movement, because he was not of the royal blood. Understand the events born out by Josephus and Roman history concerning the leadership of the Jesus' movement within Judaism completely contradict the Matthew "Peter/Rock" story! **But he could and did retain his position as chief adviser and minister of the royal court, the holder of the "keys of the kingdom". Often such a minister is the real ruler, and Peter, carrying the authority of having been an apostle and disciple from the beginning, dominated the early scene. James, however, seems to have had a strong character too, and eventually he used his position as Prince Regent to become the effective ruler of the movement. But on the usual interpretation of the "Jerusalem Church" as a purely religious, non-political movement, it is a complete mystery why James, who was not one of Jesus' twelve chief disciples, should have been made the official leader of the movement after Jesus' death, over the heads of all the main figures including Peter.**

Nevertheless, as we have shown and you might have already surmised, the New Testament contains certain features which obscure the situation outlined above, and purposefully create the impression that the early Jesus' movement was primarily a religious one, and indeed a new religion intended to replace Judaism. I have come to the conclusion over the years that if we had been "Old Testament Christians" before we were "New Testament Christians" then we would have been equipped with the necessary background and understanding concerning the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings to have spotted quite easily the alteration of the messages contained within them in the New Testament. Not having such information we have the inherited tendency to take what we read in the New Testament and project it backwards upon the Old Testament even if the Old Testament stands in conflict with it. The overemphasis of the New Testament all of our lives to the detriment of the Old Testament, the Bible Jesus actually knew and used, has set us up for being deceived by what we read in this Gentile creation called the "New" Testament which is, in reality, the Gentile's authorization and authority to replaced the faith of Jesus with their sun-worship and solar godmen.(http://paganizingfaithyofyeshua.netfirms.com)

This was accomplished on several fronts. One of these features we have already considered in a prior article in this series: the ascription of the Eucharistic rite to Jesus, as the foundation rite of a new communion incompatible with adherence to the communion or covenant of Judaism. The author of the book of Acts does not take advantage of this feature, and does not portray the early "Church" as practising the Eucharist. Instead, he apparently stresses a different alleged foundation event, that of the First Pentecost. This, then, requires some consideration.

# THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE PENTECOST EXPERIENCE...WHAT DID MEAN TO THEM...AND WHAT SHOULD IT MEAN TO US?

**The second chapter of Acts, having described in the first chapter the appearance of the resurrected Jesus to the Apostles, gives an account of a miraculous event which took place on the day of the Jewish feast of Pentecost. The Twelve Apostles received inspiration and began to "talk in other tongues." This phenomenon was accompanied by others: the sound of a rushing wind was heard and tongues of fire were seen resting on each of the Apostles. A crowd then gathered, attracted by these phenomena, and Peter addressed them, explaining the significance of the occasion. He tells them: "These men are not drunk, as you imagine; for it is only nine in the morning. No, this is what the prophet spoke of: 'God says, This will happen in the last days: I will pour out upon everyone a portion of my spirit; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy; your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'" Peter then announces that Jesus has been resurrected:**

***Men of Israel, listen to me: I speak of Jesus of Nazareth, a man singled out by God and made known to you through miracles, portents and signs, which God worked among you through him, as you well know. When he had been given up to you, through the deliberate will and plan of God, you used heathen men to crucify and kill him. But God raised him to life again, setting him free from the pangs of death, because it could not be that death should keep him in its grip.***

**He then goes on to say that the psalmist David had prophesied that one of his descendants, who would "sit on this throne," would be resurrected from the dead and would be "Lord and Messiah."**

**The account then says that many Jews were convinced by Peter's address and asked him what to do, upon which he said, "Repent and be baptized." Three thousand were then baptized and "were added to their number."**

**Answer for yourself: What was the meaning of this event from the apostle's perspectives and has the New Testament correctly reported such an understanding?**

**Throughout the centuries, this occasion has been regarded by Christians as the inauguration of the Christian religion. Scholars have pointed out that the feast of Pentecost or of Weeks *(Shavuot)* was regarded in the rabbinical movement as the foundation date of the Jewish religion, since it was held that the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai took place on that date. Likewise, the reference to baptism is held to show that this rite now became the entry rite to the new Christian religion, taking the place occupied by circumcision in the Jewish religion.**

**Accordingly, no doubt the author of Acts did see the matter in this light; yet it is remarkable how little support is given to this interpretation by the actual account which he gives, evidently based on early records of the Jerusalem Nazarenes. For nothing is said in Acts about the founding of a new religion; in fact just the opposite is recorded. The doctrines characteristic of Christianity as it later developed under the influence of Paul are not present. Thus Jesus is not described as a divine figure, but as "a man singled out by God." His resurrection is described as a miracle from God, not as evidence of Jesus' own divinity; and Jesus is not even described as the son of God.**

## *Everything said, in fact, is consistent with the attitudes of a Jewish Messianic movement, basing itself entirely on the fulfillment of the Jewish scriptures, and claiming no abrogation or alteration of the Torah.*

**The belief that Jesus had been resurrected was indeed the mark of the movement after Jesus' death. Without this belief, the movement would simply have ceased to exist, like other Messianic movements. But this belief did not imply any abandonment of Judaism, as long as it did not involve a deification of Jesus or the abrogation of the Torah as the means to salvation. It simply meant that, unlike other Messianic movements whose leaders had been killed by the Romans or their quisling henchmen, the Jesus movement intended to continue, with exactly the same objective as before, i.e. the restoration of the Jewish monarchy, the re-establishment of Jewish political independence, and the end of military empires throughout the world. Jesus was still alive and would soon return to continue his mission; meanwhile like other figures of Jewish folk legend (Enoch, Eliezer, Methuselah, Hiram of Tyre, EyedMelekh, Bithiah, Serach, the three sons of Korah, Elijah and Rabbi Joshua ben Levi) he had entered Paradise while alive and was waiting for the moment to return to Earth)**

**The belief that the Apostles had spoken in tongues and had experienced a rushing wind and tongues of flame does not imply the founding of a new religion, but merely the importance of the new conviction, reviving the Messianic hopes of the movement (hitherto in despair at the death of Jesus) that Jesus was still alive. Such**

**phenomena occur frequently in the rabbinical literature to mark some moment of great mystic illumination, and certainly do not imply any abandonment of Judaism. It is interesting that the homely touch is preserved that the bystanders thought the Apostles were drunk. This shows that the rushing wind and tongues of fire were observed by the Apostles alone, and are psychological phenomena of a kind familiar to investigators of religious possession. Of course, the recognition by bystanders of their own languages being spoken is inconsistent with their thinking the Apostles drunk, and is a later addition, though still part of the authentic tradition of the Jerusalem Nazarenes.**

# THE CALL TO REPENTANCE IN PREPARATION OF THE COMING KINGDOM....AS EVIDENCE BY A MIKVAH (BAPTISM)

**The call by Peter to baptism also cannot be regarded as a call to conversion to a new religion, except by reading into the practice of baptism a meaning that it acquired later in the Pauline Christian Church. Jesus himself had called people to baptism, and the same thing had been done before him by John the Baptist. This was always associated, as it is here in the case of Peter, with repentance. Baptism was an ancient Jewish ceremony that could have many meanings: it was used for the removal of ritual impurity (in order to prepare someone for eating holy food or entering holy precincts), but it was also part of the process of induction of a proselyte into Judaism, in addition to circumcision (or instead of circumcision, in the case of women). It could also be used symbolically, as a sign of repentance and regeneration, and, in this sense, it was especially associated with Messianic movements, which generally began with a campaign of repentance (i.e. return to the observance of the moral and ritual requirements of the Torah). Thus Peter's use of baptism was simply a continuation of the practice of Jesus and John the Baptist: not an induction into a new religion, but symbolic of a return to God in preparation for the great event of the Messianic kingdom - in this case to be inaugurated by the reappearance of Jesus, expected in the near future.**

**In view of the lack of evidence in what they said and did that they were conscious of starting a new religion, the mere dating of the event at Pentecost cannot be accorded the weight put upon it by scholars. There may be some idea in the mind of the author of Acts that this date is significant in view of its importance in Judaism as the time of the birth of the Jewish religion; but even this is doubtful, since nothing is said explicitly to this effect. Certainly there is no need to suppose that the people who actually took part in the event - Peter and the other Apostles - interpreted its timing in this way. Nor does the reception of the Holy Spirit point to the beginning of a new religion; it merely means, as Peter points out, that the gift of prophecy has been renewed. This was expected to happen in the Messianic age, and the belief that this expectation had been fulfilled was in no way a contravention of Judaism.**

**Thus everything points to the conclusion that the leaders and members of the so-called "Jerusalem Church" were not Christians in any sense that would be intelligible to Christians of a later date. They were Jews, who subscribed to every item of the Jewish faith. For example, so far from regarding baptism as ousting the Jewish rite of circumcision as an entry requirement into the religious communion, they continued to circumcise their male children, thus inducting them into the Jewish covenant. The first ten "bishops" of the "Jerusalem Church" (as Gibbon pointed out, basing his statement on the information provided by Eusebius) were all circumcised Jews. They kept the Jewish dietary laws, the Jewish sabbaths and festivals, including the Day of Atonement (thus showing that they did not regard the death of Jesus as atoning for their sins), the Jewish purity laws (when they had to enter the Temple, which they did frequently), and they used the Jewish liturgy for their daily prayers.**

**The book of Acts provides plentiful evidence that the above was the case. For example, the first follower of Jesus**

**with whom Paul had friendly contact, Ananias of Damascus, is described as "a devout observer of the Law and well spoken of by all the Jews of that place" (Acts 22: 12). This shows that not only the Jerusalem movement but also those of them who had had to flee abroad because of political persecution were loyal to the Torah. Further evidence is the following passage:**

**Next day Paul paid a visit to James; we were with him, and all the elders attended. We greeted them, and then described in detail all that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. When they heard this, they gave praise to God. Then they said to Paul:**

***"You see, brother, how many thousands of converts we have among the Jews, all of them staunch upholders of the Law. Now they have been given certain information about you: it is said that you teach all the Jews in the gentile world to turn their backs on Moses, telling them to give up circumcising their children and following our way of life. (Acts 21:18-21)***

It is abundantly clear from this that James and his followers in the Jerusalem movement saw no contradiction between being a member of their movement and being a fully observant Jew; on the contrary, they expected their members to be especially observant and to set an example in this respect. The corollary of this is that they did not regard themselves as belonging to a new religion, but as being Jews in every respect; their belief that the Messiah had come did not in any way lessen their respect for Judaism or lessen their fellowship with other Jews, even those who did not share their Messianic belief. Their belief in Jesus as "the" Messiah had not in any way influenced them to believe, as Paul was teaching, that the Law had passed away with the coming, death, and believed resurrection of Jesus!

**Answer for yourself: We have a New Testament with two competing messages and pictures? Who will you believe...Paul or James and the Jerusalem church? Can you read between the lines and see the "picture within the picture," as well as hear the "voice within the voice" in the New Testament?**

**You see...we have to read and use discernment when reading this New Testament because within it are glimmers of truth that can be verified by non-Biblical evidences and archeology. At the same time it contains a "planed Gentile agenda" to replace the faith and religion of Jesus with another. Which one have you followed?**

For the beliefs of the Jerusalem movement throw valuable light on the views of Jesus himself. If James, Jesus' own brother, and the apostles who had lived and worked with Jesus had apparently never heard of the doctrines of later Christianity - the abrogation of the Torah and the deification of Jesus - or of its central rites of the Eucharist and baptism (in its Christian sense), the natural inference is that Jesus himself had never heard of them either. In that case, we cannot regard Jesus as the founder of Christianity, and must look elsewhere for someone to fill this role. But Christian belief depends on the idea that Jesus himself founded Christianity. He did not! Honest scholars today are beginning to tell the truth. Many realize and write in their books that Christianity is based on the "post-Resurrection Jesus" (i.e. on the mythical Jesus invented by Paul), not on the historical Jesus, who may well have been a purely Jewish figure with no inkling of the Christian myth. The attitude is a little too sophisticated for the average Christian, or even the average Christian scholar, who likes to feel that Christian reverence for Jesus is directed towards the real Jesus, not towards a figment, however mythologically acceptable. One only needs to consult a few good books on "comparative religions" and read their doctrines concerning their "solar godmen" and their "angel-messiahs" that come from virgin born sun-gods and their "incarnations" to see the Jesus story of the New Testament in all its glory.

**For the concept of Jesus being the innovator of a "new" religion certain things must be done in the Gospels to foster such an idea and make it successful. Well understand that it was not hard back then and it is not harder today as the audience to whom this "new message" was directed had no discernible knowledge of a Jewish Jesus or Biblical Judaism to begin with. This is not different from the average Christian today who learns what he has been indoctrinated in from this one "corrupted book" we call the New Testament. We find the success of this replacement religion accomplished through the almost total misrepresentation of the Pharisees as stated in earlier articles as depicted in the various gospel accounts where Jesus is challenged by them and they by him (over issues which are "non-issues" is you know anything about Judaism in the first place). In this well orchestrated "replacement religion" called Gentile Christianity today we see therefore the rather simplistic attempt to preserve the idea of Jesus as a rebel against Judaism and the founder of a new religion by promoting the idea that Jesus opposed the religious leaders of his day and the religious leaders opposed him and his keeping of the "Torah" & his radical "reinterpretation of it." I found it rather amusing over the 3-4 years that I intently studied Judaism that Jesus taught nothing new! His Sermon on the Mount, for instance, has been taught before his era by many different Rabbinical authorities. Jesus had no new message. His "message" was not unique only urgent; "repent for the Kingdom of God is near." Nothing new was in this as this has been the message of Moses and all the Prophets and Rabbis before as well as after him. To find a "new message" or a "new gospel" one has to look to Paul for such deviation from the faith once given to the Saints.**

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# PAUL AND HIS MASTER PLAN FOR REACHING THE GENTILES AND GAINING RECOGNITION WHICH THE JERUSALEM CHURCH NEVER GAVE HIM

**We saw in earlier articles that the Ebionites record that Paul's rejection by the High Priest from marrying his daughter was one of the many reasons why Paul would turn his back upon Judaism. Whether or not the tale of Paul and the High Priest's daughter is a fiction created by Paul's adversaries among the Jewish Christians, Paul did experience rejection of his precepts by Jews; in particular the Jerusalem Church and James. His response was to turn his back on them and seek a more fertile field in which to sow his ideas.**

**Paul contributed greatly to a synthesis of Judaism and Hellenism and thus the creation of Gentile Christianity. With his infusion of ideas from the mystery religions and mythology, along with a perfusion of Gnostic religious ideas, Paul found himself at odds with the leaders of the Jerusalem Council. Paul spoke to the Gentiles in their own language, literally and figuratively. He preserved familiar pagan beliefs and removed all the "stumbling blocks" or difficulties of Judaism. In Gentile Christianity (the type of Christianity which Paul laid the foundation) the convert no longer had to fulfill the deeds and acts incumbent on him as imposed by God as stipulations of his Covenant. These "stipulations" were called "Laws" and the Gentiles as well as the Jews had their very own specific laws pertaining to each's particular Covenant with God. For Paul faith in "his gospel" and "his personal vision on the Damascus road" replaced the Torah. Belief in Yeshua's salvific death, resurrection, and divinity (as patterned after dying sun-godmen which the Gentiles already worshiped) guaranteed entrance into heaven and life everlasting according to Paul's ("my") gospel. If one would like to see the details on how the Gentiles evolved their concepts of their dying sun-godmen then we at Bet Emet have provided a website that details the steps in this sun-worship synthesis which were the backbone of all Gentile false worship in one way or the other: http://paganizingfaithofyeshua. netfirms.com. The demands of the Law for specific observances and behavior in personal, family, and social file, as were required by God in the Gentile's Covenant with God were revoked by Paul. When Paul's Galatian followers took him too literally and engaged in incest, the Apostle to the Gentiles backtracked and admonished them to refrain from such behavior, which is forbidden in the laws of the Torah. One must understand the "times" of the first century to understand Paul as confusion exists when one fails to discern which "laws" were commanded by God and which were "optional" but expected by God. Paul's whole letter to the Galatians was an attempt to stop imposing "mandatory" circumcision upon the non-Jew for Jewish acceptance in the Israel of God and this was noteworthy; however God expected the Jew and Gentile to be "one" and that would mean the voluntary submission to other commandments by the Gentile in order that the Jew and Gentile could "fellowship" together. For example, the Sabbath was given to the Jew only but God has said in Isa. 56 that He approves of the Gentile who "chooses those things that please Me and takes hold of My Sabbaths." In such a manner for example the non-Jew was "EXPECTED" to go beyond the minimum and take upon himself personally more than the Laws of Noah (minimum) and in so doing aid in the fusion of the Jew and Gentile becoming "one" in the Israel of God. Such inconveniences as refraining from work on the Sabbath, undergoing circumcision, or abstaining from certain foods, were abolished by Paul in his "evolutionary" religious**

synthesis following his continued rejection by the Jerusalem Church.

**An even more serious obstacle was removed: Judaism's pure, uncompromising monotheism which tolerated no other deity.** The Pauline nature of God which included the perceptions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was a concession to the polytheism of the Gentile converts. **Paul referred to Yeshua as "Lord" or "the Lord Yeshua" which are adjectives of divinity.** Incarnation, also a pagan concept, was as familiar to Paul as to his proselytes but yet totally foreign to Judaism. **Judaism insists that a person is responsible for his own behavior and no one else's sacrificial death can exonerate him of his sins.** Paul introduced into Christianity the idea of a sacrificing god who absolves a wrongdoer and brings salvation by means of the sinner's faith, not because of any effort or behavioral change on his part. Again this is totally foreign to Judaism but when Isa. 53 was altered in it's translations over the years such ideas were "read" into the texts and today it is rare for a Christian to know and read the "original" Isaiah before it was "Christianized."

# I GUESS YOU CAN GUESS WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

**Consequently, the split grew between Judaism and Christianity. The one demanded observance of ethics and morality according to God's given Law and the other required a faith in Yeshua that superseded the Law. The one offered salvation through deeds, the other, the grace of God through faith.** "The Law ... is the strongest element of contention between Judaism and Christianity, for its existence spells the negation of Christianity and its abrogation, the negation of Judaism." **For Jews, performing good deeds does not exclude their belief in God. It is not an "either-or" situation. Observance of the Law for many Jews and Gentile believers is rooted in their faith in God.** The paradox of Paul's assertion that he was a Jew was his denial of, and attack on, what Judaism holds most precious: the Torah.

**This does not mean that keeping all 613 laws in the Torah is incumbent on all people. Paul did not have to found a new religion for Gentiles who sought salvation without accepting the whole Torah. Gentiles who could not or did not want to observe such laws as circumcision, dietary restrictions, ritual cleanliness, Sabbath and festival observances, and other regulations and ceremonies, could still be considered morally upright.** Again "culturally" this might impose problems for Jews and Gentiles fellowshipping together but again was voluntary in God's eyes but againIsa. 56 gives clear indication what God desires the non-Jew do in such situations. **In the Jewish tradition non-Jews are subject to the Seven Noachic Laws (categories) or Natural Law (consisting of 66 sub-laws). They are prohibitions against blasphemy, idolatry, theft, murder, incest, and eating flesh torn from a living animal and the requirement to establish courts of justice.** Better understood these 7 Laws of Noah are "categories" containing 66 separate Laws which are the non-Jews' Covenant Stipulations whereby he can obtain and maintain right standing with God. By observing these laws the righteous of all nations have a share in the world-to-come. **This is the Jewish way of saying heaven, an expression which most approximates the Christian concept of salvation. Thus Judaism, the religion of Yeshua, does not restrict salvation to its believers or followers of the Torah. People do not have to embrace Judaism to be deemed virtuous on this earth and worthy of the next world.** Christianity, however, as a result of Paul's influence, has led many of it's adherents to the conviction that salvation is limited to those who believe in Paul's vision and personal understanding of Yeshua's resurrection, messiahship, and divinity. **Of course, this view is not shared by all Christians today, especially, not by those espousing liberal views of their religion.** Of course this goes double for the Jews who know how their precious Jewish Scriptures were corrupted by the Essenes and concepts of sun-worship were written into them only later to be applied to others; in particular Jesus. Anyone wanting to know this important deviation from Biblical Judaism and the corruption of the Jewish Scriptures need only to read in detail the information provided by this ministry at: **http://bennoah1@freewebsites.com**

# STRANGE AS IT IS...THE CHURCH HAS THEIR OWN "LAW"

**As for the laws from which Paul had "freed" the people, Christians soon realized how important they are for the functioning of an orderly, ethical society. They also recognized the need or desire in people to observe rituals and ceremonies. From early on, Church leaders introduced laws which were both detailed and voluminous. They dealt with the organization of the Church and clergy, with rites and customs, and with matters of divinity and God's relation to people. Thus, Pauline Christianity ironically incorporated from the bosom of Torah laws into ecclesiastical canon.**

**Paul's roots and upbringing (remember he was a Gentile convert) made him familiar with the thinking and mentality of the people among whom he proselytized. He was intimately acquainted with their prejudices, fears, and hopes and knew how to appeal to them. He seemed to know more about them than he did about his fellow-Pharisees and their faith and feelings.**

**Answer for yourself: That is strange don't you think?**

**Among the Nazarenes in the Jerusalem Church he was an outsider. Not having been one of Yeshua's original disciples or a member of his family, Paul did not belong to the "old-boy network."**

**Beyond the borders of Judea the world had many more Gentiles than Jews. It has been estimated that Jews constituted ten per cent of the population of the Roman Empire. Together with Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism, the extent of Jewish influence may have reached twenty per cent. Even with these numbers, the Hellenistic world held many more possibilities for Paul than the Jews did. More significantly, having come from that background, Paul was familiar with the people who lived in the Roman Hellenistic world of Greece and Asia Minor. He could identify with them and their beliefs and they could find in him a kindred spirit. Outside of Judea he was released from the constraints and dominance of a long established religion and its strictly monotheistic adherents. He was free to give vent to his imagination and creativity. He could formulate a new religion blending familiar and dearly-held ideas of the Gentiles with some monotheistic concepts which he could add for freshness and inspiration.**

**Although Paul claimed in one of his letters (2 Cor. 10), that some of his rivals criticized his rhetorical skills, he undoubtedly was blessed with great oratorical talent and power of persuasion which made him a formidable opponent in religious disputes. In that same letter and chapter he spoke of demolishing arguments against his beliefs. The Apostle's organizational ability is amply demonstrated by his having developed a new religion complete with infrastructure and followers.**

**Paul's constant travels and references to cities he had been to and planned to visit testify to his enormous energy. He was undaunted by the hazards of transportation in his time, and seems to have had no more hesitation or apprehension about undertaking an intercontinental journey than a jet traveler of today.**

**Paul's political acuity kept him safe from the even greater dangers of running afoul of the Roman authorities as he traversed the empire. Eventually, he did get into trouble with the Roman civil authorities who seized, questioned, and killed him because his success with Gentiles became a threat to them. But this did not happen before he had spread his message for a quarter of a century and laid down a firm foundation for the dissemination of his faith. Prior to his imprisonment, Paul managed to direct the religion he adopted so that it and he stayed on the right side of power. To accomplish his purpose, he used every artifice of diplomacy, not excluding expediency and duplicity. He told us this about himself in his first Epistle to the Corinthians:**

***Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I become like a few, to win the Jews. To those under the law I become like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I become like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I become weak, to win***

***the weak. I have become all things to all men...(1 Cor. 9:19-22).***

**Paul's aptitude for political maneuvering, however, came to the fore in his dealings with the Jerusalem Council, the central authority for the followers of Yeshua. In his letter to the Galatians Paul related that he delayed three years before going to Jerusalem to meet Peter and James, the leaders of the Council and Nazarene Church. On the surface it might seem strange that an apostle in the new faith would remain aloof from his co-religionists. Ostensibly, they were working toward the same objectives and were facing similar problems. It could be expected that Paul, as the new man on the job, would seek out the older members for support and advice. Instead he chose to work alone or with one or two apostles of his choosing whom he could influence and dominate. Paul was veering off on his own and setting up a new cult. He knew that his doctrines of faith and repudiation of the Torah for his converts were opposed by the men in Jerusalem. Paul did not want any interference or hindrance in building a base for his ideology. Nor did he wish to be subservient to the authorities in Judea or anywhere else. He wanted to be at the helm and in command.**

**Only when Paul had established his own missions in Asia Minor did he appear in Jerusalem; and then he came for a brief two weeks. He was less than forthright about the religious beliefs he was imparting to his converts. After that visit, Paul avoided Jerusalem and the Nazarene leadership for the next fourteen years. Only after he had a large following did he confront the leaders of the Jerusalem Council again. He came with two apostles, one of whom was a Gentile, Titus who, he said, was not compelled to be circumcised. Paul had returned to Jerusalem in triumph. He had proven himself a powerful adversary. He had established many churches according to his doctrines and had numerous converts. We are led to believe that he was received by the pillars of the Jerusalem Church as an equal which is highly doubted by those who know the dynamics at work between Paul and the Jerusalem church. We are again led to believe that he said that they gave him "the right hand of fellowship," which meant that they realized his power, accomplishments, and authority; they could not impose their religious ideas on him. We are again led to believe again that Paul faced them down on issues on which they differed and he was given a free hand to spread his ideas of Christianity among the Gentiles. Let us never forget that "winners" write the history and we only have to look at Roman dominance after the destruction of the Ebionite believers in the fourth century to know how the New Testament was slanted for a pro-Paul and pro-Roman bias. Paul's imprisonment and execution by the Romans left the field wide open to the Jerusalem Church to spread its Jewish Christian doctrines. This continued until the outbreak of war in 66 C.E. which annihilated the ranks of the Nazarenes, as it did the Essenes. The Nazarenes fled to Perea in Trans-Jordan. The movement survived in weakened form until the fifth century. Sadly, the original followers of Yeshua, once considered as Orthodoxy, was now considered heretical by both Jews (Pharisees and Rabbinical Judaism) and Gentile Christians. Most of its members eventually joined Pauline Christianity.**

**The Nazarene leaders in Jerusalem sent evangelists to Egypt and Rome. They were either less active or less effective in the Gentile world than Paul for his brand of Christianity became dominant.**

## PAUL'S UNLIMITED AMBITION

**Perhaps Paul's most outstanding characteristic was his driving ambition which fueled his other attributes. This overwhelming urge for achievement and success, combined with his skills, talents, and stamina made him invincible. Paul gave us an insight into his ambition and competitiveness in one of his letters. Explaining his background prior to his acceptance of Yeshua in his Epistle to the Galatians, Paul wrote, "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age..." What a strange way to speak of a sacred calling like religion, especially by a man who has been considered a model of devoutness. Paul sounds more like a modern-day "Yuppie" discussing his profession or business. He put everything he had into it: his strength, his time, and his considerable talents. Like most successful people, Paul neither spared himself nor hesitated to use any means**

**to achieve his goals. Even though his opponents in the Nazarene movement had the advantage of a direct link with Yeshua and a clear monotheistic message, Paul prevailed. His successors built a religious empire on his philosophy. His legacy lives on. If you have been diligent to study the materials provided by this ministry on this website then you the legacy of Paul: the purposeful corruption of the Jewish Bible, the Bible Jesus used, in order to spread and give falser support to pagan religious ideas as if they had been God ordained. If you have been faithful to read them then you have noticed but in the prior articles the hundreds of purposeful mistranslations and twistings of the Jewish Scriptures by the Roman Church. This whole website is devoted to examining and understanding Paul's legacy. Let us study to show ourselves approved before God. Shalom.**

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# CONTROVERSY AT JERUSALEM: LAW OR GRACE?

## AN EXAMINATION OF ACTS 15:1-30

***And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."***

These words in Acts 15:1 introduce an issue which challenged the Christian church soon after its inception and would continue to be debated among the believers for years to come.

**Answer for yourself: But where did this controversy originate?**

**Answer for yourself: Why was it such a crucial matter for the early church?**

**Answer for yourself: How did the apostles deal with this challenge to the early church, and what were the repercussions of their decision?**

**This essay is an attempt to answer these and other questions surrounding this intriguing central episode in the book of Acts. First, the background and cause of the circumcision question will be considered; secondly, the nature and implications of the question itself; thirdly, the process of debate and decision followed by the Jerusalem council; and finally, the ramifications of the apostles' edict for the early church as a whole.**

## THE CAUSE

**In order to trace this issue back to its roots, one must go back to the Old Testament and consider what it has to say about the relationship between Jew and Gentile. In the Garden of Eden and in the world of Noah's day, there was no separation between the two groups for everyone at that time were Gentiles. The Law of Moses given to Israel had not yet been given at Sinai, yet God's Laws existed in an oral form since the Garden of Eden when given to Adam. Certain admonitions and restrictions were given to Noah by God after the flood (Gen. 9:1-7), but these were few and general in nature. These were called the Laws of Noah within the Covenant of Noah given and intended for all mankind to observe, thus providing a way of fellowship and relationship with God. Not until God chose Abraham and his descendants to become his unique and special chosen people, Israel, and not until He raised up Moses to lead the Israelites out of bondage and to communicate to them His Law, did a clear distinction emerge between Jew and Gentile.**

Once the distinction appeared, however, God made it clear that He wished the separation between His people and the pagan nations to be readily apparent at all times (Deut. 7:6). **First, all Jews were to**

**undergo circumcision as an indelible mark of their relationship to God (Gen. 17:10-13). Of course, Israel was not the only middle eastern nation to practice circumcision, but for the Jews the ritual had special significance. In addition to this distinguishing mark of circumcision, God gave the Israelites a detailed and complex set of dietary, religious and social laws designed to remind them of their call to holiness and to prevent them from associating too closely with their Canaanite neighbors (Lev. 20:23-26).**

**Although Jewishness was largely a matter of ancestry - descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -- it was nevertheless possible for a non-Jew to become part of the nation. If, however, a Gentile wished to leave his pagan gods for the worship of Yahweh and enter in to God's covenant with Israel, he must first be circumcised (Ex. 12:48-49) and then accept the Mosaic Law as binding on himself. One could not claim to be a worshipper of Yahweh and yet refuse to revere and keep the Law.**

**Over the thousands of years mankind chose not to obey God's ways and lost much of the truth of God, including the revelation of Noah. At Sinai within the Laws of Moses we find the Laws of Noah contained. These Noahide statues (66) were intended for Gentiles and these plus the others which totaled 613 Mitzvoth were given to the Jews. At that time there was no other means of approach to God [for both Gentile and Jew] except through the Mosaic ritual and regulations for mankind had lost the revelation of God. Thus God was required to reiterate them plus others at Sinai once again.**

**For centuries -- even millennia -- this pattern persisted. Prior to Yeshua's coming, Israel had an intense hatred for the Gentiles and such animosity prevented Israel from making it easier for Gentiles to come to God by being a light to them of the Noahide Covenant with their 66 Laws. To make it harder for them, they insisted on circumcision, knowing full-well that most pagans and Gentile men who worshipped their false gods through fornication and fertility rites would object to such a sever measure, especially when circumcision was administered to their "organ" of worship. Jesus was to change that through his followers who were motivated by his death and resurrection to take into all the world in the Great Commission the Laws and Covenant of Noah for the non-Jewish nations. At first his exclusively Jewish disciples understood the message of God's good news as belonging to the nation of Israel alone (as it had previously been customary to exclude Gentiles except upon full conversion and circumcision), but the Holy Spirit soon directed otherwise, and the message spread through Philip to the half-Jewish Samaritans (Acts 8:5-8) and the non-Jewish proselytes to Judaism (Acts 8:26-36), through Peter to the uncircumcised "God-fearers" like the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2), and finally through Cypriot and Cyrenian disciples to the pagan and idolatrous Gentiles (Acts 11:19-21). With the advent of the apostle Paul's ministry, great numbers of Gentiles began coming to the Lord (Acts 13:48-49). The issue of how these non-Jewish believers were to be incorporated into the church body, therefore, became crucial.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Israel to continue to make it difficult for Gentiles to come to God by requiring circumcision which was never within the Covenant of Noah, or would they, since the resurrection of Yeshua, heed his words and the words of his Pastor James and repent and no longer require of Gentiles such an excluding rite?**

**Answer for yourself: Would Yeshua and his teachings through his church carry more weight than the anti-Gentile doctrines espoused by the majority of Israel at that time?**

**The earliest converts to Christianity had been the Jerusalem Jews who heard Peter's stirring sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36). They had been "pierced to the heart" by his call for repentance, and some three thousand of them had been baptized on that first day alone (Acts 2:37, 41). It was only natural, therefore, that these Jewish believers would feel anxious about seeing so many Gentiles entering the fellowship without undergoing the traditional conversion process (especially circumcision). After all, in the recent past no Gentile could be counted among God's people unless he was circumcised and submitted to ALL the Law (613 and not just 66): why should it be any different now?**

**So it was that while Paul was ministering in the Gentile territories of Asia, he encountered a number of Jewish**

**Christians who had traveled up from the Jerusalem area to make sure that the Gentiles understood their legal obligations as imposed by the present Religious establishment in Jerusalem.**

# THE CONTROVERSY

**Paul's Pharisaic background (Phil. 3:5) certainly gave him a ready understanding of the Judaizers' position, but on the basis of his knowledge of the gospel of grace, he strongly opposed their teaching.**

**Answer for yourself: To what did Paul refer when he speaks of "works of the Law" in Gal. 2:**

**Contrary to what you might have been taught the Galatians letter originally dealt with only one "law" and that was the law of circumcision.**

***Years later he would explain to the Galatians: A man is not justified by the works of the Law (CIRCUMCISION) but through faith in Christ Jesus... by the works of the Law (CIRCUMCISION) shall no flesh be justified... if righteousness comes through the Law (CIRCUMCISION) , then Christ died needlessly. (Gal. 2:16,21)***

**Paul and Barnabas fought the Judaizers in Antioch for some time before it became clear that the debate must be resolved by official means (Acts 15:2). At last the church at Antioch decided to send a delegation, led by Paul and Barnabas, to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders there. Whatever was decided at the council would determine the practice of the Gentile believers throughout the Roman Empire and throughout subsequent history.**

**Arriving at Jerusalem, Paul and his company were welcomed by the apostles and gave a full report of their ministry among the Gentiles (vs. 4). However, when the specific reason for Paul's visit was discussed, some of the believers of Pharisaic background immediately declared their support for the Judaizers. Not only must the Gentile believers be circumcised, they said, but they must be made to observe the Law as proselytes to Judaism had done in the past. Otherwise they were not truly saved (vs. 1,5).**

**Answer for yourself: Was this really such an important issue?**

**Answer for yourself: Couldn't the Judaizers have been allowed to prevail to keep the peace, or, as a compromise, couldn't the issue have been left up to individual conscience?**

**The apostles and elders quickly saw the foolishness of any such superficial means of dealing with the situation. No, it must be discussed and debated thoroughly, and a firm decision made, even though large numbers of Jewish believers and potential believers might be alienated if the ruling were not in the Judaizers' favor. If it were deemed necessary for a Gentile believer to accept circumcision and follow the Law "to be saved" (convert to Judaism as previously), then the death of Jesus would have been just another in a long line of dying Messianic pretenders. But convinced through his resurrection his followers no longer heard various clamorings of this or that from other Jews, but a "voice" within all voices that called for the end of bigotry and repentance from Israel where they returned their hearts back to their fathers and the love for all mankind. Such motivated them to return to the teachings of the Patriarchs and no longer enforce circumcision upon the non-Jews for acceptance with the Israel of God.**

**The debate among the apostles and elders went on at length, possibly for several days. No doubt many scriptures were consulted, many arguments raised. Luke does not record all the deliberations and all the evidence, but he does supply for us the closing remarks which decided the issue. First Peter rose up to speak, followed by Barnabas and Paul, and the final pronouncement was made by James "the Just", the half-brother of Christ who had become prominent in the Jerusalem church.**

# THE CONCLUSION OF THE COUNCIL

**Peter's attempt to persuade his brethren was based on his personal experience of how God had worked in the hearts and lives of the Gentiles who had believed through his ministry. He described how God had not only directed him to share the gospel with pagan people, but had showed His approval by bestowing the Holy Spirit on those who had believed (vs. 8). By giving the Spirit He had clearly shown that in His sight the Gentile believers were no different from and no less privileged than the Jewish believers.**

**Answer for yourself: This being the case, what grounds were there for saying that the uncircumcised Gentiles were inferior in God's sight and needed to do more to complete their salvation?**

**Answer for yourself: Had God Himself made a mistake in giving the Spirit prematurely to people who were not truly saved?**

**Surely not, said Peter.**

**Answer for yourself: Why, therefore, were the Judaizers attempting to be more strict than God Himself in this matter?**

**The burden of keeping the Law was heavy, and no man had ever been able to fulfill it completely (vs. 10). Therefore the Law could never be the means by which salvation came. Salvation was through the grace of God as a free gift, and this was just as true of the Gentiles as it was of the Jews (vs. 11).**

**Paul and Barnabas' subsequent address to the council is not recorded, though it is summarized by Luke in verse 12 of the chapter. Their approach was similar to Peter's, in that they argued their case by relating their personal experience of God's mighty work among the Gentiles. Perhaps they related the incident at Lystra where God used Paul to heal a lame Gentile who had believed (Acts 14: 8-10) or told how God had set his stamp of approval on Paul's witness to the Gentiles by reviving him after he was stoned by a mob in the same city (14: 19-20).**

**In the face of the mounting evidence the crowd was silent, considering carefully the things they were hearing. But the final word must belong to James.**

**James was known and respected, even among unbelieving Jews, as a pious and Law-abiding man. His testimony in the world was impeccable and his authority highly regarded in the church. Because his love for the Old Testament was so well known, it was likely that the Judaizers believed he would be on their side. They were in for a surprise. James opened his argument with a quotation from the Old Testament, but the verses he gave came not from the Law but from the Prophets. Using a prophecy recorded by Amos, James described how in the past God had revealed that the Gentiles would come in to God's kingdom and be called by His name. God would surely support and strengthen Israel (vs. 16), but not for her own sake: rather, Israel would be used to draw the rest of the nations to Himself (vs. 17).**

**In light of this prophecy, James explained, it would be wrong to hinder the Gentiles from receiving the gospel by putting extra requirements upon them (CIRCUMCISION). The Gentile nations as a whole had never been given the Law (613 which included CIRCUMCISION but only 66 which did not include CIRCUMCISION); the Law (613) had been given to Israel. In the past Gentiles who wished to follow God had joined the Israelite nation, but this was no longer the case. In the past few Gentiles had believed; now great numbers were coming to faith. It was clear that the Jerusalem church had repented of their bigotry toward Gentiles due to the admonition of their believed resurrected Messiah. It was clear that something significant had changed in Israel's dealings with mankind, and this could not be ignored.**

***No, the Gentiles were not to be burdened with the observance of the ALL the Law (613 including CIRCUMCISION) to be accepted within Israel and with God any longer...as imposed previously upon them by the Jews***

**Rather they were to be encouraged and supported to accept God's gracious gift of Eternal Life which was being taken to them without the rigorous restrictions as before, and this was all done in the name of Yeshua..the one who is the ultimate goal and fulfillment of the Law (Rom. 10:4, Gal. 3:24-25).**

**Nevertheless, the issue of how to facilitate closer relations between Jewish and Gentile believers could not be ignored. There was no reason that Gentiles should give needless offense to the Jews by continuing in strongly pagan practices, and it was also necessary that Gentile believers should maintain some standard of godly conduct which might make them a testimony to their neighbors both Jewish and Gentile. Perhaps James also had in mind the basic commandments given to Noah prior to the Law, which Jews today still consider to be binding upon Gentiles.**

***James, Jesus' Pastor of the Jerusalem Church ruled that although the Gentiles did not need any longer to be circumcised nor to accept the Mosaic Law (613) to be accepted by God or the Jews, they are required by God to follow a few basic principles or morality (called "necessary" in Acts by the Holy Spirit). These the the Laws of Noah that comprise the Covenant of Noah; the Covenant given by God to all non-Jews long before Sinai and the Jewish people.***

**Firstly, they should stay away from food which had been ritually offered to idols. Later, in his first epistle to the believers at Corinth, Paul would contradict James, pointing out that although such food was not evil in itself, and it was possible for a believer to eat it with a clear conscience, nevertheless Christians ought to refrain from such things if they caused others to stumble (1 Cor. 8:1-13, 10:19-20).**

**Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe here…James, Jesus' hand-picked Pastor of the Jerusalem Church, or Paul?**

**James's second ruling was that the Gentiles should stay away from sexual immorality, which was an extremely common practice among the pagans who regarded sexual activity with cult prostitutes as a form of worship. Paul also reiterated this teaching to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6:15-20). The third ruling was not repeated by Paul in his epistles: the Gentiles were to abstain from the meat of strangled animals and from the eating of blood.**

**None of these commandments were unreasonable or unduly burdensome, and they served to give some moral direction to the Gentiles and to remind them to be considerate of their Jewish brethren, while at the same time rebuffing the Judaizers who were making observance of the Law "necessary" for salvation. The whole council, including Paul and Barnabas, seems to have agreed willingly with James. A letter was drafted to send to the Gentile churches in Syria and in Asia Minor to notify them of the council's official decision. This letter served five purposes: one, it established that Gentiles who turned from idols to serve the living God were required to follow and adhere to the Laws of Noah as "minimum" requirements of fellowship with both Israel and God; second it made clear that the Judaizers who had come from Jerusalem were not officially sent by the apostles and did not have their approval (vs. 24); third, it showed unconditional approval for Barnabas and Paul in their ministry among the Gentiles (vs. 25-26); fourth it commended Judas and Silas to the work among the Gentiles (vs. 27); and fifth, it laid out in writing the simple requirements the Gentiles were to follow, so that no legalist might misrepresent or add to them (vs. 28-29) as had been done before.**

## THE CONSEQUENCES

**When the meeting at Jerusalem concluded, Barnabas, Paul and their new companions Judas and Silas promptly**

**carried the apostolic letter to the church at Antioch, where it was received with great rejoicing (vs. 30:31). Although the issue of whether or not circumcision and Law-keeping were necessary to salvation remained a hotly debated one in the Christian community for some time afterward, and Paul was soon forced to write a lengthy epistle to the church at Galatia to counteract the grievously effective work of the Judaizers among them (requiring Gentiles to be CIRCUMCISED as a condition of acceptance with Israel and God which God accepted Gentiles in the Noahide Covenant without CIRCUMCISION), there could no longer be a doubt as to the opinion of the leading apostles and elders on this question. The official statement had been made:**

**Gentiles were justified by faith in God alone, and along with this came the recognition of Yeshua's death and resurrection which was the very catalyst to energize the breaking away from Gentile-hating Judaism a remnant of Jews who would go into all the world and love their neighbors as themselves! Neither circumcision nor observance of the Mosaic Laws was necessary to complete their justification...only the 66 Laws of Noah as their Covenant stipulations.**

***Jewish believers, too, could see in this ruling a new freedom: knowing that the Law was not necessary for salvation, but it is to be obeyed and adhered to because they are already saved. Obedience to the Law is the zenith of our demonstration of our love for God.***

**They could enjoy the positive aspects of their Jewish heritage while not being burdened by it. The Law was necessary to order life and define man's choices so he could rest assured that these Covenant Stipulations called Laws were the apex of God's love for man by sharing with all mankind Who He is and what He does...and by calling man to be like Him gave man a way to become like God...holy...as He is holy. This is to be done not "to be saved" but because "we are saved." This is the major difference that Acts 15 corrected and which the Christian church needs to reevaluate in light of Paul's later teachings and those who followed in his footsteps.**

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# THE TUBIGEN SCHOOL...NOTICING THE JAMES/PETER VS PAULINE SPLIT

**In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a conservative school of theology existed at Tubingen fostered by G C Storr (1746 - 1805) that stressed the supernatural character of revelation and biblical authority. Also, a Catholic "Tubingen school" attempted in the late nineteenth century to reconcile the church's teaching with modern philosophy and biblical studies. By far the best known, however, is the one headed by Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792 - 1860), which opened up new avenues in NT study and was the most controversial movement in biblical criticism in the midnineteenth century. Its major contribution was calling attention to the distinct strands and theologies within the NT itself and establishing the principle of a purely historical understanding of the Bible.**

**The contrasts between the Synoptic Gospels and John, the various letters attributed to Paul, and Paul and the other early church leaders were carefully examined. Baur, much influenced by idealist philosophy, applied Hegelian dialectic to the NT. He found that the New Testament reflected, not a homogeneous development, but a fundamental tension between the Jewish church of Peter/James and the hellenistic Gentile church of Paul. The NT documents attempted to reconcile the conflict between an earlier Petrine and a later conflicting Pauline theology by formulating a new synthesis (making it appear as if the Apostles supported Paul when earliest church historians record that they did not). Baur believed that the authenticity of the various books could be determined by the degree to which they revealed "tendencies" of this conflict. He also traced out a similar kind of dialectical movement in the history of the church.**

**Ferdinand Christian Baur, b. June 21, 1792, d. Dec. 2, 1860, was a German theologian who founded the Tubingen school of New Testament interpretation. He received his education at Tubingen University, where, from 1826 to his death, he was professor of ecclesiastical and doctrinal history. Although Baur began teaching at Tubingen in 1826, the school's founding is properly dated from the appearance of his pupil D F Strauss's Life of Jesus in 1835. By the late 1840s the Tubingen School came under severe attack and the various members gradually drifted away. Baur himself became isolated within the Tubingen faculty as well as the German academic community, and spent his last years defending his views and producing a multivolume history of the church from a naturalistic standpoint, which explained all events by a combination of political, social, cultural, and intellectual causes but without any consideration of divine influence. Although relatively short - lived, the school with its emphasis on dialectical conflict within the early church, rejection of Pauline authorship of most of his epistles, and completely antisupernaturalistic outlook contributed significantly to the development of a historical - critical approach to the Bible that completely ignored the divine element in it.**

**As stated above Baur applied the philosophy of Hegel to New Testament interpretation. He was thus an early advocate of the historical or scientific study of the Bible. In 1845 he published a book on St. Paul, in which**

**he applied the Hegelian principle to the history of early Christianity: Primitive Jewish (Petrine) Christianity, represented by the Gospel of St. Matthew, was the original force or thesis; Pauline Christianity was the antithesis or reaction against Peter - Matthew; and early Catholic Christianity, which brought these two forces together, was the synthesis. In the process, Baur rejected the traditional attribution of a number of Epistles to Paul. He held that Paul was the author only of Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and most of Romans. Later Baur wrote extensively on historical theology. He developed a school of followers, mostly at Tubingen; but the movement declined with his death but the truth of his "thesis" has been borne out by subsequent study into this very interesting topic.**

**(J Fitzer, Moehler and Baur in Controversy (1974); R M Grant, The Bible in the Church (1954); N Harris, The Tubingen School; P C Hodgson, The Formation of Historical Theology: A Study of F C Baur; K Barth, Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century; A Heron, A Century of Protestant Theology; C Brown, N I D C C , 987.**

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# PAUL'S SPLIT FROM THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE NEW TESTAMENT'S ATTEMPT TO COVER IT UP? #1

**I remember it well. It was a sunny afternoon when setting in a class at Southwestern Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas, in 1987. In this particular class the professor was discussing certain particulars concerning issues involving systematic theology. He, for about 3 minutes, mentioned the Tubigen school and their influence long before I was born where they drew attention to the hidden conflict between Paul and James and the "Petrines" (followers of Peter/James) in the early New Testament church. He quickly glossed over the "theological split" and went on to stress the attempts made by the New Testament writes to stress the idea of "unity" in reality there was little. Then we moved to the next topic.**

**Answer for yourself: What? A "theological split?" How can that be? Who was right? How can we know for sure?**

**At that time in my life my reading of the New Testament was somewhat superficial. I had not learned, at that point in my life, to look beyond the contexts of the many different stories I read or even look for disagreements within the texts when reading the different accounts of the same stories. You might could say that I was "green behind the ears." That all would change over the next 5-6 years.**

Before we get to this "Pauline split" if you have been faithful to read the previous articles we have seen that Christianity, as a new religion distinct from Judaism, with a doctrine of salvation through the divine sacrifice of Jesus Christ and with new sacraments of baptism and Eucharist, did not arise through the "Jerusalem Church," which indeed was not a "Church" at all, but a monarchical movement within Judaism, with a belief in the miraculous resurrection of a human Jesus. The founder of Christianity as a separate religion was Paul, who first deified Jesus and claimed revelations from this new deity as the basis of the doctrines of his new religion. We must now enquire about the steps by which the split took place between Paul and the Jerusalem Nazarenes to whom, for a period, he was uneasily attached.

## THE COVER-UP OF THE TRUTH ABOUT PAUL

There are two sides to every coin. If you are traditional Christian you have heard "one" side your whole life. It is time to hear the other and understand why you have not heard or seen this "other side" of the coin and the true story of Paul. Understand before we go another step that much information exists that exposes the "theological split" of Paul from the Jerusalem Church and such evidence is not always outside the New Testament. Somebody failed to tell you about this "split" and the abundance of extra-biblical materials that reveal this "split" and how the New Testament tries to cover it up. But because you were not an "Old Testament Christian" before you became a "New Testament Christian" you are not familiar with the religious beliefs of the Jews nor of Jesus. If you

had know Judaism as well as what you know of Gentile Christianity then the writing of this article as well as others would not be necessary. Because of the failure to teach the Old Testament in Gentile Christianity along with your personal lack of a "theological foundation" concerning this Old Testament you, the current believer, are relegated to reading the accounts and letters of Paul (he wrote 2/3 of the New Testament but only 5 % of the whole Bible) and projecting backwards your personal belief that such "beliefs" of Paul were nothing more than the "Old Testament fulfilled." Nothing could be further from the truth but such an understanding only comes when one possess what he now lacks: a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the religious doctrines and religious beliefs as taught by the Old Testament.

The Gentile part of the Jesus Movement, as it existed in Asia Minor, long after the destruction of the Temple, realized that it's success depended upon "apostolic authority" and that had to be maintained and delegated for any chance of success among the masses if they were to be the new "ambassadors" of this faith. The Jews' had their book (Torah) and the Gentiles needed their book if again they wished to have Divine authority for their actions. The book had to be written in a certain way to guarantee this success. What we find in the book of Acts therefore, the book of the Church which depicts it's mission and growth, is the purposeful minimization of the conflict between Paul and the leaders of the "Jerusalem Church," James and Peter.

**On the surface we see the same story: Peter and Paul, in later Christian tradition, became twin saints, brothers in faith, and the idea that they were historically bitter opponents standing for irreconcilable religious standpoints would have been repudiated with horror.** The work of the author of Acts, himself a Gentile and close friend of Paul, was well done; he rescued Christianity from the accusation of being the individual creation of Paul, and instead gave it a respectable pedigree, as a doctrine with the authority of the so-called "Jerusalem Church," conceived as continuous in spirit with the Pauline Gentile Church of Rome.

Yet, for all his efforts, the truth of the matter is not hard to recover, if we examine the New Testament evidence with an eye to telltale inconsistencies and confusions and with a sufficient background concerning Biblical Judaism and its's religious doctrines (like salvation for instance), rather than with the determination to gloss over and harmonize all difficulties in the interests of an orthodox interpretation.

# THE FIRST EXAMPLE IN ACTS THAT ALL IS NOT WELL WITH THE APOSTLES OF JESUS AND PAUL

**The first hint of dissension in Acts is at the beginning of chapter 15:**

***Now certain persons who had come down from Judaea began to teach the brotherhood that those who were not circumcised in accordance with Mosaic practice could not be saved. That brought them into fierce dissension and controversy with Paul and Barnabas. And so it was arranged that these two and some others from Antioch should go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.***

**Paul and Barnabas then travel to Jerusalem, where they are welcomed by "the church and the apostles and elders." But again, there is criticism:**

***"Then some of the Pharisaic party who had become believers came forward and said, They [i.e. the Gentile converts] must be circumcised and told to keep the Law of Moses."***

**Answer for yourself: Why did these Pharisees maintain that Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law of**

**Moses? In Israel in the first century, partly due to the tragic past where the Jews suffered at the hands of non-Jews as well as the current Roman occupation, Gentiles were not "loved" to say the least. Any attempt that the Jews had to distance themselves from these non-Jews was in vogue as seen by Shammai's 18 articles. One way to do this was to refuse acceptance of the non-Jew into the Israel of God without "circumcision" and "acceptance of all the Law-613 Laws" which was required for "full conversion." Any status as a "Godfearer" or "Ger-Toshov" (partial-conversion) or acceptance of non-Jews who adhered to the Covenant and Laws of Noah (no circumcision and only 66 subsets of Laws under 7 headings) was not accepted by all Jews. Circumcision for an adult male could mean certain death due to infection and we must remember that they had not the availability of antibiotics as we do today so this procedure was enforced on the non-Jews on purpose for the reasons above.**

**Then follows an account of the meeting held to discuss this matter: whether Gentile converts to Jesus' movement should become full converts to Judaism. A long debate takes place, but finally Peter makes a speech, urging his own experience (with Cornelius), and arguing that conversion to Judaism is not necessary:**

***"He [God] made no difference between them and us: for he purified their hearts by faith. Then why do you now provoke God by laying on the shoulders of these converts a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear" No, we believe that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we are saved, and so are they."***

**The final word is given by James, as leader of the Nazarene movement:**

***"My judgment therefore is that we should impose no irksome restrictions on those of the Gentiles who are turning to God, but instruct them by letter to abstain from things polluted by contact with idols, from fornication, from anything that has been strangled, and from blood. Moses, after all, has never lacked spokesmen in every town for generations past; he is read in the synagogues sabbath by sabbath."***

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice any "problems" in the "red italicized" verses above?**

**You have read these verses your whole life and never new that there are severe problems in these verses. Again, this only goes to prove my point: Without a sufficient background into Biblical Judaism it is impossible to read the New Testament intelligently and understand the "truth" from "the fiction."**

# THE REAL MESSAGE OF THE ACTS 15 COUNCIL

**The above account contains many confusions, and has been colored by later Pauline Christian interpretation, but it is quite possible to work out from it what actually happened at this important conference.**

**The main clue is the list of commandments drawn up by James as the basis of conduct for Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement. For this list, as drawn up by James, the head Pastor of Jesus' movement, bears a strong resemblance to the list of Laws of the Sons of Noah drawn up by the Pharisee rabbis as the basis of conduct for Gentiles who wished to attach themselves to Judaism without becoming full Jews. With a little exegesis, the two lists can be shown to be even more similar than they appear at first sight.**

**TO ABSTAIN FROM THINGS POLLUTED BY IDOLS: This does not refer to ritual purity, for this was never regarded as a concern of non-Jews. The term "pollutionμ here is thus not meant in any technical sense, but only in its general metaphorical sense, as referring to the abomination of idol-worship. The meaning**

**is thus that the Gentile worshippers were to refrain from eating anything that had been involved in the worship of idols. This does not mean merely food brought as offerings in pagan temples, for, as pointed out earlier, libations and offerings of food were made to the gods even at ordinary meals, thus rendering the whole meal a service to the gods. Thus, this commandment prevents the Gentile worshippers from sharing meals with idol-worshippers, and is therefore more far-reaching than it appears at first sight. The effect of this commandment, then, is to prohibit for Gentile "God-fearers" everything that is forbidden to full Jews under the heading of "partaking in idolatry."**

**TO ABSTAIN FROM FORNICATION: This refers to the grave sexual offences: adultery, incest, sodomy and bestiality. Intercourse of unmarried partners was not regarded as a grave offence against biblical law, though frowned on as inconsistent with a serious life.**

**TO ABSTAIN FROM ANYTHING THAT HAS BEEN STRANGLED: This means that meat is forbidden unless the animal is killed in the Jewish way *(shehitah)*, by which the blood is drained away. The meat must be, as far as possible, bloodless. This commandment has an obvious connection with the command given to Noah (and therefore to all Gentiles), ". . . you must not eat flesh with life, that is to say blood, in it" (Genesis 9:4). This does not mean, however, that the other Jewish dietary laws are to apply to Gentile "God-fearers." They may eat the meat of all animals, since these were permitted to the descendants of Noah (". . . every living and crawling thing shall provide food for you" Genesis 9:3), but must abstain from the blood of all animals.**

**TO ABSTAIN FROM BLOOD: This appears to be a repetition of the third commandment, but a glance at the commandments given to Noah will provide the true meaning. Immediately following the prohibition of animals' blood comes a prohibition of the bloodshed of one's fellow man: "He who sheds man's blood shall have his blood shed by man" (Genesis 9 6). The meaning here, then, contrary to the commentary usually given, is a prohibition of bloodshed or murder.**

**The four commandments given to the "God-fearers" are thus basic moral imperatives. Many commentators have tried to explain them differently, as mere dietary laws, intended to facilitate social intercourse and the sharing of meals between Jewish and Gentile adherents to Christianity. This interpretation, in the view of some scholars, is said to not be able to explain the second commandment at all, since no ingenuity can turn this into a dietary law, and it also depends on inadequate understanding of the other three commandments. I cannot concur as I see in them "both" moral imperatives as well as an answer to the "Jew/non-Jew" problem in the first century. In any case, these commandments, when properly understood, can facilitate the sharing of meals by Jewish and Gentile Christians. Although these commandments still permit the eating of pork and other "uncleanμ meats by the Gentiles, which could not be shared by the Jews, we find the non-Jew called to a higher level of "holiness" as found in Isa. 56 if he so desires. Such is the heart for God and an expression of our love for our Creator. That being said, I must therefore conclude that the Jerusalem Council here laid down an overall basic moral code and social code for Gentiles which applies to their relationship with and in the Israel of God and we must consider what this implies about the intentions of the Council.**

**It is important to be clear that the drawing up of a basic moral code for Gentiles was one of the preoccupations of the Pharisaic rabbis, and the Jerusalem Council was by no means making a pioneering effort in this regard. To draw up such a code did not in any way throw doubt on the validity of the Torah as a code for Jews. It was a familiar concept in the Pharisaic movement that the Torah was never intended for more than a small minority of mankind: for those who were born Jews (who were under an obligation to keep it from birth), and for those Gentiles who elected to become full Jews and thus join the "kingdom of priests" (who thus undertook full observance of the Torah for themselves and their descendants through full-conversion). The majority of mankind, i.e. the "sons of Noah", were obliged to keep only the commandments which were given to Noah after the Flood by God (7 categories of Laws properly understood as their Covenant stipulations and requirements...which actually consisted of 66 separate laws). There were differences of opinion among the**

**rabbis (as on so many other topics) about the exact details of these Noahide laws, and about how to derive them by exegesis from the relevant verses in Genesis; but they were agreed that these laws were few in number, but that by keeping them Gentiles were accounted righteous and were eligible to have "a share in the World to Come."**

**The list of the Seven Laws of the Sons of Noah, as found in the rabbinical sources, is as follows: prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, fornication, murder, robbery and eating limbs cut off from a live animal; and, finally, an injunction to set up courts of law to administer justice. Three of these are identical to laws included in the list drawn up by the Jerusalem Council: idolatry, fornication and murder. The one dietary law differs, however: the Jerusalem Council forbids "anything that has been strangled," while the rabbis substitute the prohibition of "a limb from a live animal." This difference clearly arises from differing interpretations of the verse, "You must not eat flesh with life, that is to say, blood, in it" (Genesis 9:4). This difference of interpretation is well within the limits of rabbinical disagreement, and, though the rabbinical writings which have come down to us do not preserve a record of the interpretation given to the verse by James and the Jerusalem Council, this is an opinion that may well have been held by a minority of the rabbis. The difference does not militate against the general explanation given here that we have to do with a version of the Noahide laws, but, on the contrary, confirms this explanation, since the difference is evidently an outcome of exegesis of the same biblical verse, which forms part of the biblical passage which (together with God's injunctions to Adam) is the basis of the Noahide laws.**

**This leaves three of the Seven Laws unmentioned in our passage of Acts: the prohibitions against blasphemy and robbery, and the injunction to set up courts of law. Actually, the manuscripts show considerable divergence at this point: some omit "from fornication," some omit "from anything that has been strangled," and some even add "...and to refrain from doing to others what they would not like done to themselves" (an interesting negative version of the Golden Rule, taking the form used by Hillel, not the positive form ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels). It is clear that there were different traditions about the list of commandments and this is not surprising, since there are divergencies in the various Talmudic lists too, and there was no unanimous agreement about how to list the Noahide laws. The omission of the injunction to set up courts of law is understandable, as this was intended to apply to whole nations who became converted to monotheism, not to individual "God-fearers" who attached themselves to the synagogues. This is of supreme importance for the Christian today as we see that the normative practice in the first century was for the non-Jewish "believer" in God, whether Messianic or not, to be included in the Israel of God and participate in the synagogue; both in the study of Moses, the Law, as well as the worship and liturgy. Nowhere here is any idea of "separateness" from the Jewish faith...only finding the non-Jews' relationship within it!The omission of "blasphemy" may be because it was felt to be implied by the prohibition of idolatry; and similarly the prohibition of "robbery" may have been regarded as implied by the prohibition against bloodshed; but, again, these may both have been included in the original list and have dropped out through the reluctance of Christian editors to admit that the list is, in fact, a version of the Noahide laws. Indeed, we find throughout chapter 15 a strong reluctance to interpret the commandments listed by James as Noahide commandments, for to do so would be to admit that, when James issued these commandments, he was in no way going beyond accepted Jewish thought.**

## NOW FOR THE HARD STUFF...BETTER TAKE A SEAT

**Answer for yourself: Now, do you remember what Peter was supposed to have said in Acts as recorded by the pro-Pauline Gentile author of Acts? Let me refresh your memory:**

***Acts 15:9-10 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Would Peter really have said this? Was this what he and the Jerusalem church believed? The answer is "NO" as seen in the following decision of the Acts 15 council.**

**Thus, the speech ascribed to Peter in the above account of the debate in Jerusalem goes far beyond the question of whether Gentile converts should be required to adopt the whole of the Torah: it slips over into the assertion that the Torah is not necessary for Jews either:**

***"He made no difference between them and us (Gentiles and Jews): for he purified their hearts by faith. Then why do you now provoke God by laying on the shoulders of these converts a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear" No, we believe that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we are saved, and so are they."***

**Answer for yourself: Do you not see this? We have here Peter saying the Torah is no longer necessary for Jews...let alone the Gentile Torah in the Laws and Covenant of Noah! Was Jesus' incompetent from picking this Peter to be "his rock" when he would later contradict what Judaism and Jesus both believed and stood for? What kind of "rock" is this Peter when Jesus has said in Matt. 5:17:**

***Matt 5:17-18 17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (KJV)***

**The Gentile pro-Pauline writer of Acts has put into the mouth of Peter a total contradiction of Biblical Judaism and the teachings of Jesus! The author of Acts has just make Peter say that the Torah is no longer necessary for Jews! If this were truly spoken by Peter, which was not, then he would be answering charges from James the way Paul will in Acts 21!**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee (Paul), that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)*** *WOW!*

**This speech in Acts is a fraud; it is full of Pauline concepts which were quite alien to the Jerusalem community of Jesus' followers, who, as Acts testifies elsewhere, did not regard the Torah as a yoke too burdensome to bear, but on the contrary as a gift from God for which they were grateful.**

***Acts 21:20 20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: (KJV)***

**Peter here has been given his usual role in Acts, in keeping with the Gentile agenda: he is represented as being the stepping-stone between the old dispensation and the new. This my friends is a perfect example of Gentile anti-Semitic creationism in the writing of**

**the New Testament! If you know anything about Biblical Judaism then there is no way to deny this has happened in the pro-Gentile account in the book of Acts! Listen; Acts starts with a Jewish movement and ends with a Roman church...wake up!**

**James, on the other hand, is not given this treatment. Nowhere in Acts is he represented as anything other than a loyal follower of the Torah. In this passage under discussion, he does not respond to Peter's suggestions that the Torah should be regarded as altogether abrogated, even for Jews. James's final judgment assumes just the contrary; that the Torah remains valid, but that Gentile converts to the community of Jesus should not be required to become full converts to Judaism, but only to the Noahide laws. His final remark is:**

***Acts 15:19-21 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them (no longer enforcing upon the Gentiles the taking upon themselves the whole 613 Laws of the Torah for inclusion into the Israel of God as had been the common practice), which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)***

**This remark has proved very puzzling to Christian commentators, but its meaning is surely clear. James is saying, "There is no need for us to worry about the survival of Judaism or the proper religious education of the non-Jews who are coming to God through the Jesus' movement. Its future is assured, for the Jewish people are loyal to the law of Moses, whose words they constantly repeat in the synagogues. James was saying that beyond the "minimum" of the Laws of Noah the non-Jews, in their attendance in the synagogues, will learn the rest of the Laws and Commandments and then understand how they can acquire more mitzvot in fulfilling Isa. 56 and "choosing things that please the LORD." Therefore, there is no need to look for recruits to Judaism, or to provide reinforcements by insisting on full conversion to Judaism on the part of Gentiles. Circumcision and enforced "conversion" for fellowship will not longer be required. Rabbi Shammai and his 18 articles will no longer apply. Let the non-Jewish believers in God, and who see in Jesus the Messiah of Israel, simply declare their adherence to monotheism by adopting the Noahide code. James' remark thus implies his own unquestioning adherence to Judaism, and his confidence that Judaism would continue.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you now see more clearly the "two sides" of this coin and "theological split?"**

# THE THEOLOGICAL SPLIT BETWEEN PAUL AND THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

**There is therefore a tension in our passage between two opposing interpretations of the debate in Jerusalem.**

- **One interpretation (evidently that of the Gentile pro-Pauline author of Acts) is that this debate marked the breakdown of all distinctions between Jews and Gentiles in the Christian movement.**
- **The other interpretation (which can be discerned as the substratum of the discussion, and is thus the authentic and original meaning of the incident) is that it was decided that the Jesus movement should consist of two categories of people: Jews, practising the whole Torah; and Gentiles, practising the Noahide laws only.**

**This decision was in one way quite in accordance with normal Judaism; but, in another way, it was unprecedented. It was quite in accordance with Judaism to make a distinction between two kinds of believers in monotheism, Torah-practicers and Noahides. But it was unprecedented that both should be combined in one**

**Messianic movement.**

# THE UNIQUE SITUATION OF THE JESUS' MOVEMENT..WHAT TO DO WITH THE GENTILE GODFEARERS

**The Nazarene movement, continuing in existence, began to attract the attention of Gentiles, who were specially disposed to become converted to Judaism just because Judaism now offered a Messiah near at hand.**

**At first, it seemed obvious that any Gentile particularly attracted by Jesus would have to become a full Jew, i.e. become circumcised, commit himself to the Torah, and join the Jewish nation, for if not, when Jesus returned to Earth as King of the Jews, no Gentile would belong to his nation or be his subject. Even those Gentiles who had become "God-fearers" would not belong to the nation of the Messiah, but still belong to their own nation, revering the Messiah from a distance. Moreover, it was thought, there was some urgency in the matter; for it was a Pharisaic doctrine that full converts to Judaism would not be accepted any more after the advent of the Messiah (since it would then be to everybody's advantage to become a Jew, and sincere conversion would be impossible)."· Consequently, any Gentile who wished to be part of the inner Messianic circle after the advent of the Messiah should become a full Jew, and not be content with the status of a "God-fearer."**

**However, this produced the anomalous situation that, whereas the average Pharisaic synagogue contained its nucleus of full Jews and its outer circle of "God-fearers", the Nazarene synagogues of Jesus' followers contained only full Jews, whether born or converted. There was thus some pressure towards accepting "God-fearers" as members of the Jesus movement, so that the pattern of Nazarene missionary activity should come in line with that of Judaism in general, even though the logic of Messianism seemed to demand the acceptance of full converts only into the Nazarene movement, since the King of the Jews could not be a king over other nations too. This is a concept of Messianic Judaism and the Jerusalem Church that mainline Christianity today, as a "Gentile replacement religion," has absolutely no grasp upon! It will be a terrible thing to consider yourself as a "follower of Jesus" and a "lover of Jesus" and be rejected by him, let alone his true church, when you die...but he warned us of this...but you have to look in the Greek to see it because English is such a poor translation so often (Matt. 7:21-23). As members of a Messianic movement, the Nazarenes were interested in adding to the subjects of King Jesus; but as Jews, they were interested, like other Jews, in adding to the subjects of God, whether in the form of Torah observing Jews or Gentile "God-fearers."**

# PETER AND PAUL CLASH...AND PETER WINS...BUT YOU WON'T KNOW THAT FROM ACTS OR PAUL'S ACCOUNTS

**The "God-fearers" thus constituted a problem for the Nazarenes, and the story of Cornelius shows that the "Jerusalem Church" was divided on the question. Peter was criticized by Paul for his alleged vacillation in this matter, but, of course, Paul had quite a different starting-point from Peter in weighing the question, for Paul was convinced, by this time, that the Torah had been abolished by the divine Jesus, and that therefore the distinction between Jews and Gentiles had been abolished. Paul's theology changed over time; the early Paul of the "Galatians letter period" was a Torah observer who was against only the Law of circumcision but the Paul of Acts 21 had dismissed the Torah for both Jews and non-Jews. At this point he had become a complete apostate from Judaism.**

**Peter had quite different considerations in mind: he was concerned that it might not be doing a kindness to Gentile "God-fearers" to admit them to the Nazarene movement, when on the advent of King Jesus they would have to be treated as foreigners and sent back to their own kingdoms, or, at best, be regarded as resident aliens. Surely it would be better to encourage them to become full Jews and so have a full share in the Messianic kingdom" Yet, on the other hand, the right of a Gentile to**

**seek his salvation under the Noahide dispensation had to be respected.**

**The above discussion shows that the Nazarene movement had special problems not because it was a new religion, which it was not, but because it was a monarchical, Messianic, political movement within Judaism. It was never thought or meant to be a separate religion from Judaism which would would lose it's Jewish roots and end up with more in common with Roman sun-worship than with Moses and the Torah. This does not mean that it was a political party in the modern sense, for its aims were always primarily religious; but its religious aims were couched in political terms, in a way characteristic of Judaism generally. Just as political liberation had been the theme of Judaism from its inception in the exodus from Egypt, so the Nazarene movement made the religious future of the Jews and of the world depend on liberation from the Roman Empire.**

# PICKING UP WITH THE TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS THAT PRECIPITATED THE ACTS 15 COUNCIL...& THE SUMMONS OF PAUL TO ANSWER CHARGES BEFORE JAMES

- **One interpretation (evidently that of the Gentile pro-Pauline author of Acts) is that this debate marked the breakdown of all distinctions between Jews and Gentiles in the Christian movement.**
- **The other interpretation (which can be discerned as the substratum of the discussion, and is thus the authentic and original meaning of the incident) is that it was decided that the Jesus movement should consist of two categories of people: Jews, practising the whole Torah; and Gentiles, practising the Noahide laws only.**
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The two interpretations of the debate which we find so confusingly intertwined in Acts reflect two interpretations that were felt at the time of the debate itself, though not openly in both cases. For Paul, who travelled to Jerusalem to be present in the debate, came away from it with his own purposes confirmed. As he understood the matter, the conference had given him *carte blanche* to work in the Gentile field without having to impose the demands of the whole Torah on his converts as had been done previously by R. Shammai and those influenced by him (almost all of Israel). This was a great step forward for Paul, even though he well understood that the motives of James in assenting to this policy were quite different from his own. In Paul's mind, the whole distinction between Jews and Gentiles had ceased to be valid, for the revelation at Damascus had convinced him that the spiritual dilemma of mankind could be solved not by Torah or any other kind of moral code, but only through "faith," i.e. through identification with the cosmic sacrifice of Jesus through immersion and partaking of his supper (Eucharist), conceived as a divine figure.

**Answer for yourself: Was this "belief" by Paul espoused openly at the Acts 15 council? No!**

**Paul, it appears, did not voice this view at the conference itself. He confined himself to giving an account of his successes in winning over Gentiles to adherence to Jesus. It was the extent of these successes that finally convinced even James that Gentile adherents would have to be given official standing in the movement, rather than being regarded as having merely the status of "God-fearers" in the periphery of the synagogues. Paul, then, employed cautious tactics at this important conference. He knew that a full disclosure of his position would have aroused strong opposition from James (and Peter, whose views, historically speaking, were the same as those of James), so he went along with the main lines which the discussion followed. He went away with the permission he wanted, to admit Gentile converts to the Jesus Movement, to which he was the chief ambassador, without full conversion, and kept his "gospel" and his special understanding of the "cosmic nature of Jesus" to himself. This "Jesus" of Paul's creation could be taught to Gentiles in Asia Minor who already had dying and resurrected sun-**

**godmen and Jesus was just a "Jewish" version of the same. This would play for Paul in Asia Minor but would be strongly rebuked in Jerusalem. Paul kept this to himself at this point in his clash with James and the Jerusalem Church.**

***Indeed, the mere fact that Paul obeyed the summons to come to Jerusalem and face the charges made against him shows that at this time he was not revealing openly his full doctrines.***

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH....A NECESSARY EVIL FOR PAUL

**For, in reality, Paul did not accept, either in his private thoughts or in his teaching to his Gentile converts, that he was under the authority of the Jerusalem community led by James. On the contrary, he regarded his own authority as higher than theirs, since his doctrines came direct from the risen Christ, while theirs came only from the earthly Jesus. Yet he came meekly to Jerusalem when summoned, and submitted himself to the decision of James, for he did not consider the time ripe for a complete break with Jewish Christianity. Without Paul resting on Jerusalem's recognition and support for his efforts then Paul understood that he would be unsanctioned and his results would be severely compromised.**

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# PAUL'S SPLIT FROM THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE NEW TESTAMENT'S ATTEMPT TO COVER IT UP? #2

## GALATIANS CHAPTER 2...PAUL REVISIONIST HISTORY

**Answer for yourself: Did you know that Galatians chapter two is Paul's personal view of James and the Jerusalem church, let alone his personal view upon the Peter/Paul problem in Antioch?**

**I strong suggest you open your New Testaments to Galatians chapter 2 and read it to refresh your memory remembering all the while that this is Paul's personal view of James and the Apostles, Acts 15 Council, and Peter's later meeting with him in Antioch. Remember this was written in Asia Minor thousands of miles from James and there was no internet, TV, telephones, and the news of Paul's views would take time to work their way to James and the Jerusalem apostles following the Acts 15 Council. But by not deceived; the accounts will finally arrive and Paul will again be summoned to answer charges a second time in Acts 21! More on that later.**

**What happened next can be gathered from an interesting account given by Paul in the second chapter of Galatians. Understand that Galatians chapter two reflects two different events that Paul rolled into one. First, he presents his own record of the Jerusalem Council discussed above; and then he describes an incident not mentioned in Acts at all, when Peter, some time after the Jerusalem Council, visited Antioch, and serious friction occurred between Paul and Peter.**

**In his version of the Jerusalem Council, Paul (writing for Gentile converts who accepted his valuation of himself as an Apostle superior in inspiration to the Jerusalem leaders) gives himself a much more lofty role than appears from the account in Acts. Instead of being summoned to Jerusalem to answer charges against him, Paul represents himself as having travelled to Jerusalem "because it had been revealed by God that I should do so." What a convenient way to describe such a "summons." We say earlier that Paul did not at the Acts 15 Council reveal his "cosmic Jesus" theology to James or the Jerusalem Church. However, now in Galatians, he makes mention that he did! Instead of concealing his new doctrines concerning his "crucified sun-godman" and confining himself to the question of whether converts to belief in Jesus' Messiahship should be made into full Jews or left in "God-fearer" status, Paul represents himself as having fully revealed his new doctrines to the Jerusalem leaders, though only in private. Let me assure you that if Paul had openly told James and the Apostles that Jesus' death, in his "gospel," had replaced the Torah for Jews and non-Jews as well, then all hell would have broke loose! He might have been killed on the spot for such apostasy! Instead of a tribunal, in which the final decision is delivered by James in his capacity as head of Jesus' movement, Paul gives the impression of a conference between leaders, in which he was treated as of equal status with James. The conclusion of this "private conference" is expressed as follows:**

***But as the men of high reputation (not that their importance matters to me: God does not recognize these personal distinctions) - these men of repute, I say, did not prolong the consultation, but on the contrary acknowledged that I had been entrusted with the Gospel for Gentiles as surely as Peter had been entrusted with the Gospel for Jews. For God whose action made Peter an apostle to the Jews, also made me an apostle to the Gentiles.***

***Recognizing then the favour thus bestowed upon me, those reputed pillars of our society, James, Cephas [Peter] and John, accepted Barnabas and myself as partners, and shook hands upon it, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles while they went to the Jews. All that they asked was that we should keep their poor in mind, which was the very thing I made it my business to do. (Galatians 2: 6-10)***

**Answer for yourself: Do you notice anything different in Paul's version and attitude from the Galatians texts above when compared with the Acts 15 account that we looked at earlier? If you don't then you are brain-dead!**

Paul's conclusion of the Acts 15 Council differs so remarkably from the conclusion recorded in Acts that some scholars have doubted whether it refers to the same conference, while others have adopted the explanation that Paul's account deals with private discussions which took place behind the scenes at the Jerusalem Council, while Acts deals only with the public discussion. Such explanations, however, are unnecessary. Paul's letter to the Galatians, after Acts 15, was written at a time when his break with the Jerusalem leaders was widening and was almost complete. The liberty he was given at the Acts 15 council by James the the other Apostles was taken to the limit by Paul after he left; instead of no longer requiring non-Jews to accept all the Torah and only the 7 Laws of Noah Paul proceeds to adopt the ultimate in his understanding of the issues. No longer will it be required of non-Jews to accept 7 Laws but they will be required to accept no Laws; and neither will the Jews. Paul had made for himself and his followers a "Torahless" religion in Christ. As if that was not enough in the Galatians passages Paul refers to the Jerusalem Apostles and leaders (those who knew Jesus best) with defiance, stubbornness, disrespect, slander; this is hardly veiled contempt.

Here is the paradox though! Paul still needs to claim their sanction and authority for his own role, however, so he feels free to represent them as having acknowledged his own **equal status** with them and as having appointed him as "Apostle to the Gentiles; "though, in fact, as the account in Acts makes clear and as can be gathered from other sources, the Jerusalem leaders by no means gave up their proselytizing activities among the Gentiles, nor did they regard themselves as merely "apostles to the Jews." This fact is seen that in the case where it was Peter who took the "keys" to Cornelius (the first Godfearer in Acts) and not Paul! The Jerusalem Council did not hand over the whole Gentile missionary field to Paul. Nor did it ban the conversion of Gentiles to full Judaism; it merely decided that such conversion was not a necessity.

# THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT...PETER CHASTISES AND CORRECTS PAUL...BUT PAUL TURNS THE TABLE ON US BY HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS IN GALATIANS

**Now comes Paul's account of subsequent events:**

***But when Cephas [Peter] came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. For until certain persons came from James he was taking his meals with gentile Christians; but when they came he drew back and began to hold aloof, because he was afraid of the advocates of circumcision. The other Jewish Christians showed the same lack of principle; even Barnabas was***

***carried away and played false like the rest. But when I saw that their conduct did not square with the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas, before the whole congregation, "If you, a Jew born and bred, live like a Gentile, and not like a Jew, how can you insist that Gentiles must live like Jews." (Galatians 2:11-14)***

**This passage, despite a certain incoherence, is very revealing. One incoherence, however, arises from the New English Bible translation, "because he was afraid of the advocates of circumcision." This should read, as in the Revised Version, "because he was afraid of those of the circumcision." No one was "advocating," at this stage, that all converts to belief in Jesus' Messiahship should be circumcised, i.e. adopt full Judaism. The Jerusalem Council had enacted that this was not a necessity. The Greek simply says "those of the circumcision."**

**Answer for yourself: Who were these that Paul feared...the Orthodox Jews or the the Jewish Christians? Historically it can be shown that the Orthodox Jews did not bother with the Messianics very much so we have no doubt who these are to whom Paul referred: the Jewish Messianic Christians...followers of James and the Apostles and the Jerusalem Jesus Movement!**

**Answer for yourself: Why is this passage so important?**

## *This passage is revealing because it shows that there was much stronger conflict between Paul and the Jewish followers of Jesus than is ever allowed to appear in Acts by it's pro-Pauline writer*

**Nowhere in Acts is there any criticism of Peter or any suggestion that Paul and Peter did not see eye to eye on all matters. On the contrary, Peter is represented as the link man between Paul and the Jerusalem community, struggling to bring them round to the more enlightened views of Paul. True, Peter is represented in Acts as having to overcome psychological difficulties in performing this transition role: something of the "artificial" stupidity syndrome attached to the Twelve still clings to him. But the open criticism of Peter by Paul (not followed up by any suggestion of a change of heart by Peter as a result) found in this passage in Galatians is quite alien to the portrayal of Peter in Acts. Galatians must be regarded here as much more historically reliable, not only because it is earlier, but because it reveals a state of affairs that the later Church wished io conceal; it is a passage that goes against the grain.**

**On the other hand, the previous passage in the chapter in Galatians, in which Paul gives his account of the Jerusalem Council, is less historically reliable than the account in Acts, since Paul has such a strong motive to aggrandize his role.**

**The actual point of conflict between Paul and Peter, however, is not quite so clear as the fact that serious conflict took place, and that this conflict involved not only Peter but also James (for the emissaries to whom Peter deferred are described unequivocally as "from James," unlike the previous critics of Paul, whose criticisms led to the Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:1). It seems, at first, that the issue is whether Jewish followers of Jesus should take their meals together with Gentile followers of Jesus; but Paul's last remark seems to shift the issue to the question of whether Gentile followers should observe the Jewish dietary laws. To clarify this matter, the following points should be borne in mind:**

**By the decision of the Jerusalem Council, Gentile followers of Jesus were not obliged to keep the Jewish dietary laws, but only to refrain from the meat of "strangled animals." This means that they were allowed to at the meat of animals forbidden to Jews, e.g. pig and rabbit, but were still obliged to kill the animals by the**

**Jewish method, by which the blood was drained away.**

**This means that Jewish followers of Jesus would still not be able to share the food eaten by Gentile followers if this food consisted of meat forbidden to Jews but permitted to Gentile "God-fearers."**

**On the other hand, this did not mean that Jewish followers of Jesus were necessarily forbidden to share the same *table* as Gentile followers. Provided that the food on the table was such as could be eaten by Jews and Gentiles alike (e.g. vegetarian food, or meat from animals permitted to Jews, or fish of the varieties permitted to Jews), there was no reason why Jews and Gentiles should not share the same table.**

**As far as "food sacrificed to idols" was concerned, this was forbidden both to Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus, so did not constitute any difficulty in fellowship at table.**

**Even if food forbidden to Jews was served to Gentiles at the table, while permitted food was served at the same table to Jews, this would not infringe any essential law, though pious Jews might look askance at this arrangement, feeling that there might be some danger of getting permitted food mixed up with forbidden food.**

**In view of the above points, one may ask what exactly Peter was doing when he shared meals with Gentile followers of Jesus. Commentators have assumed that he was actually sharing forbidden foods, such as pig, with the Gentile believers. This would mean that he had, by this time, adopted Paul's view that the Torah was obsolete, having been supplanted by the salvation doctrine of identification with the sacrifice of Jesus and his resurrection. On this view, Peter, having made this radical transition from observant Pharisee to pork-eating Christian, suddenly had cold feet when some emissaries from James arrived and pusillanimously removed himself from the table of the Gentile converts and started acting like an observant Jew again. Upon this, Paul upbraided him, not for this vacillating behavior, but for "insisting that Gentiles must live like Jews." Such an insistence had been renounced by the Jerusalem Council, and had, in any case, never formed part of Jewish doctrine, so it is extremely puzzling that this now should be made the issue.**

**The explanation to which commentators are forced is that the Jerusalem elders, led by James, had changed their minds and reversed the decision of the Jerusalem Council, and were now sending emissaries to insist that, after all, Gentile believers in Jesus' Messiahship must undergo full conversion to Judaism.**

**This whole exegesis is confused and improbable. If Peter had crossed the gulf from Torah observance to Paul's new salvation religion, he would not have slipped back into observance with such ease. In any case, the evidence is that Peter never renounced adherence to the Torah.**

## WHAT REALLY HAPPENED...THAT PAUL TRIES TO COVER UP...WITH THE HELP OF THE AUTHOR OF ACTS?

**The probable explanation of the incident is as follows.**

**Peter arrived in Antioch believing that Paul was adhering to the terms of the Jerusalem Council, by which Gentile converts would refrain from food offered to idols and from meat containing blood. In this belief, Peter had no hesitation in sharing meals with Gentiles, who, he was confident, would not offer him anything forbidden to a Jew and would themselves not eat anything forbidden by reason of idolatry or blood.**

**Then, however, emissaries arrived from James who informed Peter that his confidence was misplaced. Information had reached James that Paul was not adhering to the Jerusalem decision, but was allowing Gentile converts to eat everything without restriction, including food offered to idols.**

**Answer for yourself: What evidence exists that Paul was disobeying James and the Jerusalem Council?**

**Answer for yourself: Have you read I Cor. chapter 8 recently?**

**It is here that Paul declares that this prohibition of not eating meat sacrificed to idols applies only to the "weak" people who cannot distinguish the food from its idolatrous uses.**

**This is a severe violation of the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah let alone direct disobedience to James and the decree of the Jerusalem Acts 15 Council which Paul was commissioned to enforce.**

**Paul's behavior and his epistles teach us, if one again knows Judaism and the events accurately, that he no longer adhered to the distinction between the Torah and the Laws of the Sons of Noah, because Paul now regarded all law as outmoded and as irrelevant to salvation in any form, shape, or fashion!**

**Answer for yourself: STOP! Turn to Matthew 19 where Jesus is asked:**

*Matt 19:16-17 16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (KJV)*

**Paul no longer believes this. His "revelation" on the Damascus road, whatever it was, has completely turned him against Jesus' teachings and the salvation offered the world in the light of the Jewish nation and their Torah!**

**On receiving this information from James, Peter withdrew from fellowship at table with Paul's Gentile converts, since he no longer trusted them to keep the Noahide dietary laws or to respect his own adherence to the Torah dietary laws - they might well put before him food which they knew was forbidden to an observant Jew. This withdrawal of Peter from fellowship at table with Paul's Gentile converts was no weak vacillation but a climactic act of withdrawal from Paul himself, and a decisive break between the Pauline movement and the Jerusalem community. It marked the rejection by Peter of Paul's new doctrines, which demolished the whole distinction between Jews and Gentiles within the movement; or rather (since there was never any question of Peter adopting such a doctrine) it marked the recognition by Peter that Paul had indeed adopted such a doctrine, which put him beyond the pale of Judaism and made it impossible for any follower of James to associate with him or his converts. No longer was rumors that incriminated Paul and his teachings slowly making their way to Jerusalem; now we have eyewitness proof from Peter that Paul was two-faced...."becoming all things to all men...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." A better understanding is that since being rejected by the Sadducees as recorded by the Ebionites and having not his way with James previously in Acts 15 where he had to hide his "true beliefs that departed from Judaism, Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings, and Jesus," he was not above lying to accomplish a name for himself and a following. Such is the shame of the ego of such a man!**

*1 Cor 9:20-22 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. (KJV)*

**Paul's alleged reproof of Peter was thus never delivered to Peter in person, but was an afterthought inserted by Paul in his account of the break. What this afterthought amounts to is this: "Peter, when you consented to share a table with my Gentile converts, you were accepting the abolition of the distinction between Gentiles and Jews. Now, however, you are insisting on the old requirements by which Gentiles must keep a law of their own, and if they want to achieve full fellowship with the people of God, they must adopt the whole**

**Torah."** However, the inconsistency of which Paul is accusing Peter did not really exist, for Peter, when he shared a table with the Gentiles, was not conceding any point essential to Judaism, since he thought that they were adhering to the Jerusalem resolution **(THINK)!**

Let us set the stage so our understanding of these events is correct. Paul got out of the Acts 15 situation unscathed and without tipping his "theological hand" in front of the Jewish Apostles. Now at Antioch things escalated! We now have eye-witness Apostolic proof of Paul's apostasy and rumors no longer are the only evidence of unsubstantiated facts. So far, the break between Paul and the Jerusalem leadership was only on the personal level of a quarrel between Paul and Peter. Later came the final and decisive break, in which Paul was officially repudiated by the Jerusalem movement as a whole.

# THE CONTINUAL HOUNDING OF PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...AND HIS CONTINUAL DEFENSE OF HIS "APOSTLESHIP"...HAVE YOU REALLY EVER THOUGH ABOUT IT?

**Answer for yourself: If the coming of the Messiah was the hope of Israel then why is Paul continually beaten by Jewish Christians and the followers of James and the Jerusalem Church in Asia Minor where they continually monitored his activities?**

There is ample evidence in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and also in his two Epistles to the Corinthians, that in the years following his quarrel with Peter in Antioch, he had to face continual opposition from emissaries of the "Jerusalem Church," who were sent out by James and Peter to counteract Paul's teaching about the abrogation of the Torah. Moreover, it appears that Paul had to defend himself frequently from the charge of being without true authority in his teaching, since he had no direct personal link with the historical Jesus, but relied only on visions, which were of doubtful validity. However, this uneasy situation did not yet lead to a complete schism. On the one hand, the Jerusalem leaders, while deeply suspicious of Paul, were not yet sure that he was actually preaching against the Torah. Paul's missionary activities were almost entirely among Gentiles, who were not required to observe the Torah. Consequently, his teaching to them could always be plausibly represented by Paul, when enquiry was made from Jerusalem, as not contravening any essential Jewish doctrine. He seems to have been quite willing to use a considerable amount of deception in his relations with Jerusalem, and to have done his best to reassure Jerusalem of his loyalty to Judaism, while at the same time, as his Epistles show clearly, teaching his new converts that the Torah was now entirely obsolete. Paul himself proclaims his policy of adapting his tone to his audience, and hiding his anti-Torah beliefs from those who were loyal to the Torah:

***To Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; as they are subject to the law of Moses, I put myself under that law to win them, although I am not myself subject to it. To win Gentiles, who are outside the Law, I made myself like one of them, although I am not in truth outside God's law, being under the law of Christ. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. Indeed, I have become everything in turn to men of every sort, so that in one way or another I may save some. (1 Corinthians 9:20-22)***

This passage ostensibly describes only his policy in winning converts to belief in Jesus, whether Jews or Gentiles: but if Paul could pretend to be an adherent to the Torah when approaching Jewish prospective converts, he could easily use the same deception when reporting his doings to the central body of the Jesus movement in Jerusalem. In fact, we have, in Acts, in an episode to be considered shortly, a vivid description of Paul's effort to convince the Jerusalem leaders of his

orthodoxy by the performance of an elaborate ritual act; this episode shows how far Paul would go to disguise his true beliefs about the Torah from the Jerusalem leaders.

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul go to such lengths to avoid a break with the Jerusalem leadership?**

**Answer for yourself: Why did he not simply found a Church of his own, since his views differed so radically from those of James and Peter?**

**Paul, in his three great missionary journeys, had founded many Gentile communities of Christians, and, if he had broken his links with Jerusalem altogether, could have set up a Gentile Christian Church under his own leadership; this, indeed, is what happened in later years, after Paul's death. But Paul, apparently, could not envisage such a drastic step. The authority of .Jerusalem still remained paramount for him, just as the authority of the Old Testament never lost its hold over him, compelling him to reinterpret it in weird, unpredictable ways, but never allowing him to cut himself loose from it, in the way adopted by the more logical Paulinist of the next century, Marcion. Through the Jerusalem leadership, Paul saw himself as linked to the whole history of Israel, from Abraham onwards; to detach himself would be to sink into the forlorn status of being a Gentile again, without past or future.** To transform Judaism was his aim, not to abandon it. The masters of Pharisaism were to come to him for instruction; and this could only happen if they occupied the same arena.

# ACTS 21...THE COVERUP.....CONTINUES

Paul was prepared to adopt devious tactics in order to maintain the links between himself and the Jerusalem leadership. The first crisis had been successfully surmounted by the decision of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, by which Paul was given a free hand and was able to keep his new doctrines to himself. A second crisis, however, now arrived in Antioch by the surprise visit of Peter and the fall-out of such a confrontation is seen as recorded in Acts 21. Paul was once again summoned to Jerusalem one more time to give an account of himself. This time the charges were more serious and the prospect of some ingenious compromise more unlikely. This might have been the moment to refuse to come and thus precipitate a complete break. Instead, Paul accepted the summons. He still hoped to lull the suspicions felt against him by the Jerusalem leaders; and he also felt that he had a strong means of appeasing them by bringing them a substantial sum of money collected by him for the upkeep of the Jerusalem community.

This culminating scene of Paul's relations with the Jerusalem Nazarenes is described in muted terms in chapter 21 of Acts. As in the case of the Jerusalem Council (about five years before), the author of Acts is much concerned to play down the conflict, so that it will not appear that Paul was the true founder of Christianity rather than Jesus and his immediate disciples. Yet even the author of Acts has difficulty in disguising the bitter conflict of this scene:

***So we reached Jerusalem, where the brotherhood welcomed us gladly. Next day Paul paid a visit to James; we were with him, and all the elders attended. He greeted them, and then described in detail all that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. When they heard this, they gave praise to God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of converts we have among the Jews, all of them staunch upholders of the Law. Now they have been given certain information about you: it is said that you teach all the Jews in the gentile world to turn their backs on Moses, telling them to give up circumcising their children and following our way of life. What is the position, then" They are sure to hear that you have arrived. You must therefore do as we tell you. We have four men here who are under a vow; take them with you and go through the ritual of purification with them, paying their expenses, after which they may shave their heads. Then everyone will know that there is nothing in the stories they were told about you, but that you are a practising***

***Jew and keep the Law yourself. As for the gentile converts, we sent them our decision that they must abstain from meat offered to idols, from blood, from anything that has been strangled, and from fornication.µ So Paul took the four men, and next day, after going through the ritual of purification with them, he went into the Temple to give notice of the date when the period of purification would end and the offering be made for each one of them. (Acts 21:18-26)***

**It is clear that the author of Acts has much softened the tone of the discussion here recorded between Paul and the elders of the Jerusalem community. We know that for a fact if we balance all the events discussed up to now with the account as presented by the pro-Pauline writer of Acts. It is stated that he was greeted warmly on his arrival, and congratulated on his achievements among the Gentiles. This is rather hard to believe when by Paul's own accounts he was consistently and constantly accosted by them and beaten by those of the same religious persuasion several times before. Then the elders mention, as if incidentally, that, though the elders themselves believe Paul to be a fully observant Jew in spite of the rumors to the contrary. The author would have us completely forget Peter's first hand account of Paul's apostasy in Antioch which by now had been personally reported back to James. Let us not forget that it was this report by Peter of Paul's total disregard for the Torah for both Jews and Gentiles in Antioch that prompted his summons to answer charges before James a second time! Instead of a heated encounter when Paul is accused to his face by James of outright lying and misrepresenting Jesus and Jesus' message to the nations we have this watered-down account of mutual admiration. Again something is out of step with the events of the time. Lucky for us we don't have to depend totally upon the New Testament to dig out glimmers of truth as evidence exists outside the Bible that fills in these gaps for us. But Rome made sure you did not see that!**

**We are falsely led to believe that some thousands of those within the Jesus Movement are doubtful about this Pauline apostasy and the charges brought against Paul. The deception is beyond measure. We are led again to believe that the Apostles, in the face of such testimony of Peter and others, only need to be reassured that their suspicions about Paul were not valid; this was to be accomplished by an elaborate demonstration of loyalty to the Torah. Otherwise, there will be trouble of some unspecified kind (They are sure to hear that you have arrived).**

This is a most unlikely tone for the elders to adopt. If the reports of Paul's abandonment of the Torah were so insistent (and indeed they were perfectly true), the elders themselves, who were no less "staunch upholders of the Law" than any of their flock, would have been thoroughly concerned, especially as Peter (who, strangely enough, is not mentioned specifically as present on this occasion) will have told them about his own rift with Paul and the reasons for it. It is much more likely that this incident was in the nature of an official enquiry or even a **trial,** and that Paul had been officially summoned to attend it in order to answer, once and for all, the charges now being made against him on all hands.

If he failed to attend or failed to satisfy the elders having attended, he would be formally ejected from the Nazarene movement. Paul could not have that. Everything he had worked so hard for (his following and recognition among his Gentile churches) was at stake. It seems that, in the course of this enquiry, Paul refused to admit that he had advocated the abandonment of the Torah in his teaching. Consequently, James and the other elders had decided to put him to the test or rather to devise a procedure by which he would publicly repudiate any teaching that he might have given against the continuing validity of the Torah. The news of this public repudiation by Paul of his former views would quickly reach his Gentile converts in Asia Minor, and thus strengthen the hands of the emissaries from Jerusalem who were working to correct Paul's teaching. Then and only then would Paul's disciples know for sure that behind Paul's "gospel" was allegiance to the Torah that Jesus supported and taught his whole life. The elders were probably convinced that Paul had indeed spread an anti-Torah doctrine, but they hoped to counteract the effect of this by an exhibition of repentance on Paul's part.

**Paul had thus failed to find any compromise formula to save his face, as he did at the previous Jerusalem Council. He was forced to capitulate and to agree to a public humiliation and retraction.**

# THE SILENCE OF PAUL IS DEAFENING...WHERE IS HIS GOSPEL NOW?

**Answer for yourself: Why does Paul not begin, at this point in the story in Acts, to spout the gospel he preached among the Gentiles concerning Jesus to James? Since they don't agree with or adhere to Paul's beliefs concerning Jesus why is Paul not trying to "save them" by teaching the same things to them he did elsewhere? How many "gospels" are there? Well, there really is two: Jesus' and Paul's and both are 180 degrees opposite.**

Commentators have strangely failed to comment on this abject behavior of Paul's and his failure to defend "his gospel" at this point in his religious career when answering charges before James for the second time. Since he had proclaimed in his Epistles and all through Asia Minor that the Torah was dead, that circumcision was no more than a mutilation, and that observance of the Torah was of no effect towards salvation, which could only be obtained through the sacrifice of Jesus and the partaking of Jesus in his Eucharistic supper, one would have thought that this was an excellent occasion to give witness to these views and his revelation before the Jerusalem Council once and for all. Let us not forget that these views were the core of Paul's New Testament and were for him all important! Instead of trying to convert the Apostles to his Damascus road revelation of Jesus as he had done among the non-Jews, he consented meekly to an action that reinstated the Torah, and thus relegated Jesus to the status of a Jewish Messiah figure with no aim of salvation, but only of liberation - the freeing of the people of God from foreign domination so that they could devote themselves more fully to the study and practice of the Torah.

**Answer for yourself: What is wrong with Paul? Where are his convictions? Was Paul's "becoming all things to all men" being shown in broad daylight for what it really was? Would Paul make a good politician today since he evidently can say and do anything as the situation demands?**

Paul must have been overawed by James on this occasion. It is hard to imagine Peter as a hothead throughout the New Testament but a pansy when up against Paul! Surely James and Peter were up for the test when then encountered this "Pharisee of Pharisees." Probably, though this is not mentioned in the account in Acts, Peter too took a prominent part in the enquiry, and the third leader, John, who receives only passing mention in Acts, must have been a formidable character as well. Though Paul could convince himself, when not in their presence, that he was their equal or even superior, as well as convince his non-Jewish audiences whom had never met them, he could not sustain this attitude to their faces. In reality, these men had the gravity and presence of the great Pharisee teachers (such as Hillel and Gamaliel), and the upstart Paul could not withstand them in their own milieu; he succumbed, and consented to what was in effect a recantation.

**Quite apart from the awesomeness of the Jerusalem leaders, however, there were strong factors compelling Paul to adopt unpalatable emergency policies while in Jerusalem. He was surrounded by enemies, some of whom threatened physical danger. To comply with the demands of one set of enemies meant to offend another. All of Paul's considerable powers of adaptability were called for in order to escape the situation into which he had plunged by obeying the summons to Jerusalem.**

**We will continue our study of the events that unfolded next in the forthcoming article in this series.**

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# INFIGHTING BETWEEN PAUL AND THE JERUSALEM CHURCH (PETER AND JAMES)

**There was a connection between Paul's struggle with the Judaizing Christians and his conflict with Peter which he described in Galatians and which is alluded to in Acts. Peter was a Jew with Jewish loyalties and identification; he was designated as the apostle to the Jews by the Nazarenes. According to the Pseudo-Clementine writings of the second century Peter had always been loyal to the Torah and was at odds with Paul and his teachings. These writings are especially important for the Christian to read and understand.**

**The Pseudo-Clementine writings are so-called because they had been incorrectly attributed to Pope Clement I who lived at the end of the first century C.E. Because of the ascription to Clement, the literature was preserved as patristic writings. They are now recognized by most scholars as Jewish Christian or Ebionite works of the late second or early third century (R. Graves and J. Podro, The Nazarene Gospel, H. Maccoby, The Mythmaker, p. 180, Encyclopedia Brittanica, 1972, Vol 5, pp. 900-901; The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1978, p.235). Peter opposed the views of Paul with regard to following the requirements of the Torah.**

**In Gal.. 2 Paul announced,**

***"I opposed Peter to his face because he was wrong."***

**He went on to indicate that his differences were not only with Peter but also with James and the Jerusalem Council regarding dietary observances (see the Antioch Incident articles on this site for more information). Paul accused Peter and the Jews with him of hypocrisy, a term frequently hurled at Jews in the New Testament whenever there was a disagreement. Paul criticized Peter because he discontinued eating with Gentiles after representatives from the Jerusalem Council had come to see him. Paul said that the "circumcision group" (Jews or Judaizing Christians) had frightened Peter. Paul went on to fault his fellow apostle for living like a Gentile while being a Jew and forcing Gentiles to follow Jewish customs. Since this is in Paul's letter, we have only his version and no record of Peter's response. It is not certain what Paul meant by his phrase "living like a Gentile" and which behavior he called hypocritical. It could have referred to Peter eating with Gentiles and expecting them to keep Jewish dietary practices *(kashrut)*. However, when Peter stopped eating with them, Paul called him a hypocrite. This was a no-win situation. If Peter continued to eat with Gentiles, he was a hypocrite; when he stopped, he was still a hypocrite. Either way Peter was faulted.**

**It is possible that Peter was reminded by the Jerusalem delegation to avoid certain forbidden foods when dining with Gentiles. Thus one sees the strong influence of Paul. Of course, there was no prohibition against Peter or any Jew inviting Gentiles to his home for meals. Anyway we have dealt with this "Antioch Incident" in detail on other websites and have shown that Paul's conduct in this matter was a violation of the Laws of the Noahide Covenant prohibiting Idolatry and he was sternly rebuked by the men from James and**

this incident was the catalyst that required Paul to appear a second time before James to answer charges in Acts 21 concerning his violation of the Torah and the misrepresentation of Yeshua's teachings.

**After Paul's confrontation with Peter there seemed to be no further contact between the two men and they ceased to have amicable relations (S.G.F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem, p. 138; R. Graves and J. Pedro, *op. cit.*, p. 19). This scandal is slurred over in Acts which tried to show that Paul was always on good terms with the original disciples and that he (Paul) brought Peter and James around to his view.** Barnabas also deserted Paul in the dispute and this speaks volumes since they were bosom buddies!

**After his exchange with Peter, Paul took the occasion to recapitulate his philosophy of justification by faith and replacement of the Law by belief in Jesus. The question has been raised whether Paul would have written as he did (on justification and supersession) if it were not for the Judaic competition and Judaizing Christians he encountered. It is possible that Jewish rejection of his teaching made him "dig-in" to a more extreme position vis-a-vis the Law which he thought would be more palatable to Gentiles. His reaction might have been a practical and calculated response to the certain loss of Jewish converts and the greater possibility of gaining Gentile proselytes. This is the politics of religion. Paul used whatever arguments he felt would convince people and add to his following.**

**There were significant differences between Peter and Paul. The former was a born Jew. He grew up in Galilee, a rural agricultural area where the Jews were ardently devoted to their religion and country. He knew Jesus personally, had worked with him, and was directly familiar with his precepts. Peter could remember Jesus as a teacher and a Jewish messiah figure. Paul was born in a prosperous, Gentile, urban center which served as the capital of a Roman province. He was raised in a strongly Hellenistic environment where paganism was ubiquitous and predominant. According to Acts, he came to Jerusalem as a young man, old enough to have mastered a trade and to have been influenced by certain religious ideas. He never knew Jesus in his life. He did not acquaint himself with the rustic Galilean life which had molded and influenced Jesus and all his disciples. While in the country he spent his time in Judea and Jerusalem.** In fact, Paul never developed a kinship with the men who had been close to Jesus, such as his brother, James, or his other disciples who were now the leaders of the Jerusalem Council. Paul remained aloof from the people associated with Jesus and his teachings. Inevitably there would be a clash between men like James and Peter who had known Jesus and wanted to disseminate his teachings and Paul who claimed to have met Jesus only in a vision and whose religious ideas were contrary to those of Jesus' original followers.

In Phil. 3 Paul spoke of his earlier connection with Judaism prior to discovering Jesus. He described his former beliefs as worthless and said in Greek, "I consider them excrement" (3:8). It is no wonder that those who remained loyal to the beliefs of Jesus' disciples were alienated from Paul and the doctrines he introduced into Christianity and applied to Jesus whom they had known. Their writings testify to the split between Peter and Paul and express their indignation at the betrayal of Jesus' beliefs--teachings which Peter, along with James and other Jewish Christians or Nazarenes, wished to continue. The main point of contention concerned the Torah which Paul's adversaries did not feel needed to be revoked because of their belief in Jesus as a messiah. They experienced none of Paul's antagonism to Jews; they felt *identified* as Jews. Neither did they reject the Torah or believe that it was superseded. The literature of the sect recorded Peter's anger at Paul for transforming the traditions and beliefs of the early Church into his own personal religion and thus subverting theirs. Paul had devised such a new formula that his faith became different enough to separate him from the founders ideologically and physically.

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES....COUNTERS PAULINISM

**James' differences with Paul are graphically illustrated in numerous passages in a letter written in his name. Neither the author of the Epistle of James nor its date can be established. Although many believing Christians**

**consider the author to be Jesus' brother, most scholars doubt this. The document has been traditionally dated to around 62 A.D. This is the year that James was executed by order of the High Priest, Ananus, for which the Pharisees were outraged and had him removed from office. This incident alone shows the close feelings which the Pharisees had for Jewish Christians and the total lack of enmity between them during the time of Paul. Perhaps the writer was a Nazarene which is what Jesus' brother was and wrote in his name. The letter emphasized the importance of the Law, especially its ethical principles, which was (and is) a Jewish viewpoint. Of particular interest is the stress the author laid, not only on the value, but the necessity, of deeds to supplement faith (not faith alone as Paul said). The writer devoted several verses of this short letter to this subject. Let us read some of them:**

***Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ..But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does. (1:22,25)***

***What good is it my brothers if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such a faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well-fed" but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself if it is not accompanied by action is dead. But someone will say, ?You have faith; I have deeds.µ Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do. (2:14-18)***

***You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see his faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete by what he did...You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.(2:20-26)***

**These phrases express the unremitting opposition James had for Paul's dogmas in regard to faith, deeds, and the Torah. James' respect for the Law is seen in his description of it as giving freedom (1:25, 2:12). This is a direct contradiction of Paul who disparagingly defined the Law as producing slavery.**

**James reiterated Jesus' understanding of the essence of the Torah when he said, "If you keep the royal law found in Scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing right" (2:8). He wrote of a subject dear to the spirit of the Tanakh and frequently mentioned there, "look after the orphans and widows in their distress" (1:27). The essential messages of the Epistle of James are testimony to the dichotomy between the religious views of the Nazarenes and Paul. The epistle reveals the serious disagreement which the early devotees of Jesus had with the ideas Paul imposed on their sect.**

**The letter of Jude, written around 90 C.E., also displays the conflict within the Church about divergent philosophies which continued to rage after the death of Peter, James, and Paul. The letter has been interpreted**

**by some as a criticism of the Gnostics while others see it as an indication of the conflict between the Pauline and Nazarene schools.**

**Support for the latter view comes from 2 Peter. The author is unknown and the letter has been dated by scholars anywhere between 100 and 150 C.E. It is considered a response to some of the issues in Jude which indicates that the controversy continued for a couple of centuries.**

**The literature about Peter which has been preserved in the Pseudo-Clementine writings and the letter of James disclose the fact that Paul's doctrines differed from the early Christianity of Peter, James, the other disciples, and Jerusalem Church in general, despite Paul's denial of this in Gal. 2:9. But let us not forget such passages as Gal. 1:18-24 and Gal. 2:6-9 were not found in the First New Testament and the Book of Galatians in 150 A.D. but would only appear in the rebuttal of Irenaeus and his "second" New Testament in 180 A.D. We see here clearly the Gentile's attempts to bolster Pauline authority for their doctrines which were encountering stiff opposition by those who had direct links yet with the Jerusalem Church and its tradition.**

**Now you know the truth about the matter that the writers of the New Testament tried to conceal to later generations of believers.**

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# THE BEGINNING OF PAUL'S WOES....THE CHALLENGE FROM THE MESSIANIC CHRISTIAN JEWS & HIS SUBSEQUENT TRIALS

**We left off at the last article with Acts 21 and the problems presented to the Jerusalem church concerning Paul and his "gospel" and his "mission" to the Gentile nations where he was misrepresenting Jesus and his "true gospel." The report about Paul's apostasy had reached James and the Jerusalem church through two different avenues. The Asian Jews had reported back to Jerusalem and James at various times what they had both heard and saw on different occasions regarding Paul and there was reason for concern as we find in Acts 21:**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee (Paul), that thou (Paul) teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV) A***

**But let me remind you there is more to these rumors than meets the eye. What precipitated the Acts 21 "test" for Paul given to him by James in order to prove these rumors as false was mandated by Peter's first-hand eyewitness account of Paul's apostasy when he arrived on a surprise visit in Antioch. Once Peter relayed in person to James the events at hand something had to be done about the "Paul problem." Paul had to defend himself and was required to answer such charges for a second time before James. We find this account in Acts 21 where Paul consented to make a public demonstration of his supposed loyalty to the Torah in the Temple. Paul, as you will see, has an "ace" up his sleeve not anticipated by James and the other Apostles. Paul was hoping his charade in Jerusalem would be the end of opposition to him on the part of the Nazarenes of Jerusalem, who, like their leader, James, as had been Jesus, were loyal adherents of the Torah. In the event, however, as the story is told in Acts, he met with serious trouble from another quarter: from "Jews from the province of Asia," who recognized him while he was in the Temple and raised a riot against him, from which he was lucky to escape with his life. The incident is described as follows:**

***But when the seven days were nearly ended, the Asian Jews caught sight of Paul in the temple, and they stirred up the whole crowd, and laid hands upon him, shouting: "Come and help, Israelites! Here is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the Law, and this place; moreover he has brought Greeks into the temple and defiled this holy place.μ For they had earlier seen Trophimus of Ephesus with him outside in the city, and they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple. So the whole city was roused, and a crowd gathered. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the doors were shut. While they tried to kill him [or: were clamoring for his death] a report was made to the tribune of the cohort: "The whole of Jerusalem is in an uproar." (Acts 21: 27-31)***

**Answer for yourself: Who were the "Jews from Asia"? Were they orthodox Jews or could they have been Messianic Jews of the Jesus' Movement sent to follow and report on the actions of Paul?**

**Answer for yourself: Why were they so violently opposed to Paul if all he was teaching was the hope of Israel..the Messiah had come and was to return? Was such a hope cause for whippings and beatings of Paul as Paul reported he sustained?**

# WAS PAUL TWO-FACED AND DID HE TALK OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF HIS MOUTH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...? YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND THIS IN ORDER TO PROPERLY UNDERSTAND WHAT PAUL IS SAYING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Whenever I try to teach people that Paul contradicts Jesus' Gospel and himself says two different and conflicting messages in the New Testament many respond with the typical answer: "no he does not." This simply shows me and others who know better the lack of understanding of the New Testament that such ones who respond in such manner actually possess.**

**Answer for yourself: If what Paul himself says about his preaching to Jews on his missionary journeys is correct, then these Jews had no reason to believe him to be an apostate from Judaism, for Paul's method when approaching Jews is described by himself as: *"To Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; as they are subject to the Law of Moses, I put myself under that Law to win them, although l am not myself subject to it" (1 Corinthians 9: 20-22).***

**Paul tells us that he only taught the Torah to the Jews. But the accusation above as found in Acts 21:27-31 tells a different story and this, remind you, was included in Acts by a pro-Pauline writer no less.**

**Let me explain really simply what Paul was all about and this explains why his writings contain such contradictions. It was only to Paul's Gentile converts that Paul revealed that he regarded the Torah as obsolete; and he may have revealed this also to Jewish converts to Christianity, when he considered that their progress in understanding had reached such a level that they would be receptive to anti-Torah teaching. It was only in the Jesus Movement where we find conflicting teachings on the validity and authority of the Torah. For James and the Jerusalem Church the Torah was necessary and a Divine guide for love and conduct for the "elect." For the Pauline branch of the Jesus Movement the Torah was obsolete by the coming of the Divine savior and his death and supper; but again this was Paul's "mystery" that was only confided to his "initiates" when he considered it permissible to exchange the Torah for such a "revelation." But be not mistaken; although Paul usually only taught this to non-Jews since they already had their "crucified solar saviors" and "dying/resurrected sun-godmen." Paul was not asking his "converts" to accept anything new only adding to the host of "astral deities" that already believed in; Jesus was for Paul just another in a long line of them. This information is crucial to understanding Paul's "gospel" for what it really was: an outright repudiation of Judaism and a syncretistic mixture of pagan solar concepts with just a little Judaism that gave it some presumed authority since Judaism was recognized as a "world religion" in his day as well (http://freewebsites.com/bennoah1 & http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com).**

**Not all the Jews accepted Jesus as the Messiah and for them nothing could outdate or replace the Torah as it was Eternal! The news of his abandonment of the Torah was thus confined to the Jesus movement itself, where it had caused such anxiety that Jewish Christian emissaries had been sent out to combat his teaching, and Paul himself had been summoned twice (Acts 15 and Acts 21) to Jerusalem to answer charges before the supreme tribunal of the Nazarenes.**

# THOSE OUTSIDE OF THE JESUS MOVEMENT WERE LITTLE CONCERNED WITH PAUL

**As far as Jews in general were concerned, the Jesus movement was a political resistance movement against the Romans, pious and extremist. They did not know enough about the internal politics of this movement to distinguish Paul from its other leading figures. Whenever they came across Paul in his missionary travels, he seemed to be preaching pious Judaism, combined with belief in Jesus as a Messiah figure. That was not a problem. The opposition which Paul met from Jews on his travels was two-fold:**

- **Some was on the grounds of heresy or apostasy when Paul taught the Torah had been replaced by his special revelation about Jesus which even the Apostles who knew Jesus best knew nothing about.**
- **The rest of the opposition toward Paul was on the political grounds that Paul, like his fellow Nazarenes of Jerusalem, was stirring up trouble with the Roman Empire and thus endangering their comfortable settlements in the Jewish Diaspora. This was something the High Priest, the one commissioned by Rome to control the peace and the Jewish people, constantly was fearful in such high strung messianic times.**

**This is explicitly stated in relation to the Jews of Thessalonica, who denounced Paul to the local magistrates in these terms: "The men who have made trouble all over the world have now come here; and Jason has harboured them. They all flout the Emperor's laws, and assert that there is a rival king, Jesus" (Acts 17: 6- 7). Here we get a whiff of political reality for once. In other passages, to be sure, the opposition of Diaspora Jews to Paul preaching against the Jewish religion is expressed in doctrinal terms; but this is part of the depoliticizing approach of the author of Acts, which he neglected to apply in the case of the Jews of Thessalonica.**

**Paul's main interest, in any case, was not in converting Jews, but in converting Gentiles, in accordance with his self-description as the "apostle to the Gentiles." It is in his Epistles to his Gentile converts, which have been preserved in the New Testament, that he pours out his real thoughts and expresses his view that salvation does not come from "faith" with concurrent attempted observance of the Torah. These thoughts became known to the Jewish adherents of Jesus in the natural course of events, but the Jews as a whole would have no means of learning about them.**

**Armed with this background it is easy to see that the "Asian Jews" who dragged Paul out of the Temple and denounced him to their fellow Jews as an opponent of the Torah, Israel and the Temple were in fact Jewish Christians who had been in conflict with Paul in his Asian (Asia Minor) missionary activities, in Galatia, for example. It was against the possible violence of these Jewish Christians that James had already given Paul a warning:**

***You see, brother, how many thousands of converts we have among the Jews, all of them staunch upholders of the Law. Now they have been given certain information about you~ it is said that you teach all the Jews of the gentile world to turn their backs on Moses, telling them to give up circumcising their children and following our way of life. What is the position, then" They are sure to hear that you have arrived. (Acts 21: 20-22)***

**James is warning Paul that there may be mob violence, and the mob of which he is talking is the rank and file of the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem (whom he reckons in "thousands," though, in fact, the Greek word here is *myriades,* which means "tens of thousands"). It seems that the Nazarenes led by James had made great advances in Jerusalem, and a significant proportion of the population now adhered to them. Notice the great advancement and results that James' "gospel" had achieved as opposed to scholars today which teach us that after James' men had continually followed and "untaught" Pauline doctrines in the wake of Pauline journeys**

**that at end of Paul's life he had most likely no more than 50 or so followers (THINK)! You see it was not the disinterested Jews but the Jews of Jesus' Movement who were the people from whom Paul had to fear violence, for they were in touch with the Jewish Christians of the Diaspora and were thus familiar with Paul's personality and teaching, which they regarded with hostility. Some of these Nazarenes belonged to the extreme wing, which, as argued earlier had previously been led by Stephen and were activists, participating in the resistance against the Roman occupation. Such Messianic zealots of the Jesus' Movement (who indeed had much in common with the Zealot party founded by Judas of Galilee) would be particularly likely to resort to violence against someone like Paul, who was reported to have given up Jewish patriotism as well as reverence for the Torah. Incidentally, when James said to Paul that he is reported to have been telling "all the Jews of the Gentile world" to abandon the Torah, he must be referring to the Jewish Christians only, or is perhaps reporting an exaggerated rumor which has spread among the Nazarenes of Jerusalem. For, as we have seen, Paul was careful, when talking to unconverted Jews, not to say anything against the validity of the Torah: "To Jews, I became like a Jew."**

**Answer for yourself: Why, then, has the author of Acts disguised this matter by representing the people who attacked Paul, dragged him out of the Temple, beat him and called for his execution, as "Jews," not as Jewish Christians? The obvious answer to this is that the author of Acts wishes to minimize the opposition to Paul in the Jerusalem movement, to which he always attempts to attribute Pauline doctrines. Yet there is an obvious discrepancy between this picture and the speech of James to Paul, in which it is clearly revealed that James fears for Paul's physical safety because of the hostility felt towards him by "tens of thousands" of members of the Nazarene community who were true followers of Jesus and his "true gospel."**

**Having been attacked by the Jewish Christians, Paul was rescued by the Roman police, who had some difficulty in finding out why he had become the centre of a disturbance, but gathered that he had been guilty of some offence which had angered the crowd and so arrested him. Some of the details now added in chapter 22 of Acts are not credible. Thus the Roman commandant is said to have asked Paul whether he was "the Egyptian who started a revolt some time ago." Such a question is hardly likely about a man who was so obviously unpopular with the Jewish masses that they were calling for his execution. A Messianic leader such as "the Egyptian" (about whom details are given in Josephus) would be much more likely to be popular with the Jerusalem crowd, though he would be regarded as a dangerous nuisance by the High Priest and his followers. The same thing can be said about Paul; and let us not forget that Paul had deserted his position under the High Priest earlier on the Damascus road so there is little love lost between the High Priest and Paul. This issue must be understood thoroughly but that will come later.**

# PAUL'S ACE UP THE SLEEVE...HIS NEWLY PURCHASED ROMAN CITIZENSHIP

**Answer for yourself: Was it customary for Messianic Jews, like James and Jesus, who advocated the coming of the Kingdom of God to the world where all nations and governments and enemies of Israel are brought under subjection of God's rule to have Roman citizenship (affiliation with the same nation that had been persecuting and killing their people since 63 B.C.E.? The question is almost too ridiculous to even ask yet we think nothing of the fact that Paul's life is saved by his Roman citizenship...something quite awkward I would think for a Jew....if Paul was really a Jew...and possibly we learn something about Paul here that the author of Acts and Paul himself has failed to relate to the reader; namely, as the Ebionite documents tell us, Paul was a Greek proselyte to the faith!**

**When James' warning became reality and Paul's life was threatened, we find Paul rescued by the Romans and subsequently was brought into the barracks and instruction came down to examine him by flogging, and find out what reason there was for such an outcry against him. But when they tied him up for the lash, Paul said to**

**the centurion who was standing there, *"Can you legally flog a man who is a Roman citizen, and moreover has not been found guilty".* When the centurion heard this, he went and reported it to the commandant. *"What do you mean to do" he said. "This man is a Roman citizen."* The commandant came to Paul. "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen"? "Yes," said he. The commandant rejoined, "It cost me a large sum to acquire this citizenship."**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Roman citizenship was often purchased and could be purchased by non-Romans (other than Roman Gentiles)?**

**Answer for yourself: The writer of Acts records for us that Paul said, "But it was mine by birth." This is highly debateable today for obvious reasons; if Paul was a Jew, even though born in a Greek city, then why was he a Roman citizen? Then those who were about to examine him withdrew hastily, and the commandant himself was alarmed when he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had put him in irons. (Acts 22: 24-9)**

**Answer for yourself: If you had been called up on charges before James already once before and had subsequently made your break with the Jerusalem church after the Peter/Antioch incident when it was shown openly before an Apostle that you were teaching Jews and non-Jews that it was permissible to eat food sacrificed to idols (considered idolatry) which both the Covenant of Noah and the Covenant Of Moses forbid, then why in the world would you ever submit to going before a tribunal once again to answer charges when you had no defense and would be shown publicly for what you really were....a renegade and apostate from Judaism who was teaching a new religion to the Gentiles under the disguise of the authority of the Jesus Movement?**

**We must begin to look beneath the pages of the New Testament in order to determine why Paul, a shrewd man, had done such an apparently foolish thing as to go to Jerusalem at this point in his life. Jerusalem was for him a hornet's nest: he was in danger from enemies on all sides: from the Jewish Christians who were incensed at reports of his strange and idolatrous teachings about Jesus, and also, as we shall see, from his former associates, the High Priest's party, at the other end of the politico-religious spectrum. But Paul had much to gain by going to Jerusalem: he could perhaps do what he had done before, at the time of the Jerusalem Council, and gain a compromise solution by which he could avoid the painful break that he dreaded. If the worst came to the worst and he was beset by enemies, he could play his trump card, of which his enemies were unaware, that he was a Roman citizen. He could invoke the protection of the Roman authorities, and so escape from Jerusalem unharmed.**

**It seems likely, indeed, that the Roman police did not arrive on the scene simply because a hubbub arose, as in the account given by Acts, but that Paul had previously arranged that they should be sent for in case of trouble, for Paul was not quite alone in Jerusalem. It appears that he had a Gentile supporter called Trophimus at hand, and we also know that his nephew was in Jerusalem and was active in helping him out of difficulties (Acts 23:16). His emergency plan was thus put into operation, and one of his supporters alerted the police. Support for this probability comes from the letter sent by the commandant, Claudius Lysias, reporting on the affair to the Governor, Felix, in which he says:**

***"This man was seized by the Jews and was on the point of being murdered when I intervened with the troops and removed him, because I discovered that he was a Roman citizen" (Acts 23: 27).* From this report by the commandant, it appears that he was informed of Paul's Roman citizenship before he intervened. Otherwise, he probably would not have intervened at all, since the Romans were not so conscientious in their duties as police as to be much concerned whether some Jew was killed or beaten in a religious squabble. The author of Acts, however, does not wish to give such an impression of conscious planning by Paul, and thus postpones Paul's revelation of his Roman citizenship until he was about to be lashed (but then forgets to alter the commandant's letter accordingly).**

**According to Acts, Paul had only once before invoked his Roman citizenship when in trouble. This was during his second missionary journey when he was at Philippi, in Greece, when Paul and his companion Silas incurred the wrath of certain Gentile idolaters who denounced them to the magistrates, who ordered them to be beaten (Acts 16:19ff). On that occasion, both Paul and Silas claimed to be Roman citizens, but strangely enough, said nothing until after they had been beaten. There is thus some doubt about the historicity of this episode, especially as it seems incredible that not only Paul, but also Silas, were Roman citizens. It is surprising enough that Paul was a Roman citizen, without his companion Silas being one too. It seems, therefore, that the author of Acts has inserted the claim to Roman citizenship as an afterthought in the story, with the effect that Paul and Silas were not only released from prison but also reduced the magistrates to fear and trembling. The story of Paul's declaration of his Roman citizenship in Jerusalem later was too good not to be used in some earlier context too.**

**It is also surprising that Paul never invoked his Roman citizenship on other occasions when he was flogged. According to his statement in 2 Corinthians 11:25, he was "beaten with rods" (i.e. by the Roman lictors) three times, and apparently did not protest on these occasions that the punishment was illegal. Nor does Paul mention anywhere in his letters that he was a Roman citizen, though such a mention might have been expected.**

**These considerations would seem to point to the possibility that Paul acquired his Roman citizenship only shortly before he travelled to Jerusalem. This was a time in his life when he had a large amount of money at his disposal, for he had made a special effort to collect a huge sum to bring with him to Jerusalem (see 1 Corinthians 16:1-4). This was in fulfillment of his promise at the Council of Jerusalem to make a substantial contribution from his new Gentile converts to the expenses of the central organization of the Jesus movement in Jerusalem. James had demanded this not as an act of charity (as Acts depicts it), but as a gesture of submission to his own authority as head of the Nazarenes. Paul, therefore, on the eve of his fateful visit to Jerusalem, when his loyalty to James and to the Torah would be questioned, felt it imperative to fulfil this pledge. But while in possession of such large sums, it would be natural for him to think of some method of insurance by which he could prepare a mode of escape, if things went wrong in Jerusalem. An excellent plan in this regard was to purchase Roman citizenship for himself, by this means he could call upon Roman help in an emergency.**

**Paul would not consider it dishonest to use funds collected for the "Jerusalem Church" for the purpose of acquiring Roman citizenship for himself, because this was not just a matter of personal advantage, but of high policy, affecting the whole future of Christianity. If negotiations in Jerusalem broke down, his own survival was essential for the continuance of the doctrines which he held dear, and on which, he deludedly believed, the salvation of all humanity depended. Moreover, these funds belonged to Jerusalem only if circumstances made possible the continuance of his own loyalty and submission to the Jerusalem leadership as the official centre of the Jesus movement. If matters came to a schism, then Paul himself, instead of the Jerusalem leadership, would become the central authority of a Gentile Christian Church whose funds it would be his duty to administer. So he was merely putting aside a contingency fund, in case the schism actually took place. It is likely that he held back a considerable sum, in addition to the money he spent on purchasing Roman citizenship, in case it was needed to found his own Church.**

# IS THERE ANY CORROBORATING EVIDENCE TO PROVE WHAT WE SAID IS TRUE?

**Some corroboration of this is to be found in a detail that the author of Acts lets slip. This is that Felix, the Roman Governor, *"had hopes of a bribe from Paul; and for this reason he sent for him very often and talked with him" (Acts 24: 26).* This happened while Paul was Felix's prisoner, awaiting**

settlement of his case. Now a Roman Governor would not expect any paltry sum as a bribe, so he must have thought that Paul had considerable amounts at his disposal. Indeed, Paul had previously gone out of his way to hint as much (verse 17). It seems, then, that Paul had not handed over to James all the money which he had brought from the Gentile churches of Asia Minor and Greece; he still had a financial base which he could use for bargaining purposes.

**The above considerations throw a impressive light on the conversation already quoted between Paul and the commandant, Claudius Lysias:**

***But when they tied him up for the lash, Paul said to the centurion who was standing there, "Can you legally flog a man who is a Roman citizen, and moreover has not been found guilty?" When the centurion heard this, he went and reported it to the commandant. "What do you mean to do?" he said. "This man is a Roman citizen." The commandant came to Paul. "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" he asked. "Yes," said he. The commandant rejoined, "It cost me a large sum to acquire this citizenship." Paul said, "But it was mine by birth." Then those who were about to examine him withdrew hastily, and the commandant himself was alarmed when he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had put him in irons. (Acts 22: 25-29)***

**This whole conversation is spurious, as argued before, since Paul had really been known to be a Roman citizen before he was rescued by the Roman commandant, and otherwise would not have been rescued at all. So what is the purpose of the insertion of this conversation" It is as if the author of Acts is going out of his way to tell us that Paul did not purchase his Roman citizenship, a possibility which might not otherwise have occurred to us.** There is an element of "protesting too much" in this fictional insertion. It should be remembered that this alleged assertion of Paul's, "But it was mine by birth," is the **only** evidence in existence that Paul was born a Roman citizen, which is ***prima facie*** unlikely.

# PAUL HAD BROKEN FROM THE JERUSALEM CHURCH...NOW IT IS THERE TURN

When Paul declared himself a Roman citizen, this was the end of his uneasy association with the "Jerusalem Church." The announcement would have come to James and the other Jerusalem leaders as a great shock. **The Jesus movement was essentially an anti-Roman movement. Its aim was the freeing of the Jewish people from bondage to Rome. None of its members, therefore, would have sought Roman citizenship...this should tell you all you need to know about the "real" Paul!** But Paul's new interpretation of the life and death of Jesus had severed Paul from adherence to Jewish patriotism or to politics in general. He no longer thought of Jesus as the Messiah, in the Jewish sense, who would restore the House of David and Jewish independence, but as a cosmic figure who had more in common with Gnosticism than Judaism who had come to provide a way of salvation for all mankind by his death on the cross. This "salvation" was not a matter of political liberation as the Torah taught since salvation had always been taught and offered in the Torah and no explicit need was ever expressed for some vicarious suffering; it was a personal, individual matter that transcended all politics, and indeed made politics irrelevant. To Paul, it did not matter whether a person was physically enslaved, since this did not affect his spiritual and cosmic salvation. Thus Paul urged his disciples to obey Rome, whose power was "ordained of God," and he also urged slaves to be contented with their lot and not to strive for freedom. This contempt for politics was in fact a political attitude - an acquiescence in the political status quo. **Consequently, the Pauline Christian doctrine was fitted from the start to become the official religion of the Roman Empire. Nothing is more welcome to a military empire than a religious doctrine that counsels obedience and acquiescence. That Paul, the creator of the doctrine that eventually became the official Roman**

**religion, made himself into a Roman citizen is symptomatic.**

**At the same time, the leaders of the Nazarene community in Jerusalem, knowing that Paul's Roman citizenship must have been purchased for a large sum of money, would immediately know how Paul had come into the possession of such a substantial amount - by his collection of contributions for the "Jerusalem Church" due to the famine in Jerusalem. Literally Paul stole the tithe and alms collected for the Jerusalem followers of Jesus and robbed God to buy his Roman citizenship! This again would have put him beyond the pale as far as they were concerned; to them, the matter would appear as plain dishonesty and embezzlement, though to Paul himself, as we have seen, the use of these funds for the preservation of what he regarded as the true Christianity would have seemed quite justified.**

**We have seen that Paul through deception, trickery, lying, and finally robbing of the tithe and the alms offerings was able to save his life and come out relatively unscathed from being called upon the carpet for the second time by James. But now the Jerusalem Church knew the truth about Paul and many of the extra-biblical writings concerning Paul and these events would now be written exposing this man for what he really was...a man who was secretly working in opposition to Jesus and his gospel and doing everything underhanded as possible to keep us the sham that his ministry was endorsed by the Jerusalem Church. That no longer was the case. Because of the failure of Christians to day to study sufficiently to see these "cracks" in the New Testament which reveal glimmers of truth concerning what the New Testament Gentile writers have tried to conceal they have fallen prey to this Pauline deception and paradoxically are more of the followers of Paul the apostate from the religion of Jesus than Jesus.**

**But Paul is not of the woods yet...his old nemesis the High Priest wants him since he deserted them on the Damascus road earlier and went over the the High Priest's enemies...the Pharisees. Paul is yet in a lot of trouble and his life in not worth a plug nickel! But no longer are the Messianic Jews of Jesus' Movement after him; the High Priest and his hoodlums want him dead.**

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# THE EBIONITES AND THEIR TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE TRUTH ABOUT PAUL

**In the preceding several articles I have tried to build up, from the evidence of the New Testament itself, a picture of Paul that is very different from the conventional one.**

We have seen that Paul, in describing himself as deeply learned in Pharisaism, was not telling the truth.

On the contrary, we have reason to think that Paul reacted to his failure to acquire Pharisee status by creating a synthesis of Judaism with paganism; and that the paganism so deeply embedded in his conception of Jesus argues a Gentile, rather than a Jewish, wellspring. We have seen, further, that the impression of unity between Paul and the leaders of the Jerusalem Jesus movement, so sedulously cultivated by the author of Acts, is a sham and that there is much evidence, both in Acts itself and in Paul's Epistles, that there was serious conflict between the Pauline and the Jerusalem interpretations of Jesus' message. This conflict, after simmering for years, finally led to a complete break, by which the Pauline Christian Church was founded, comprising in effect a new religion, separated from Judaism; while the Jerusalem Nazarenes did not sever their links with Judaism, but regarded themselves as essentially believers in Judaism who also believed in the resurrection of Jesus, a human Messiah figure.

## THE JERUSALEM CHURCH...DID IT RETURN TO JUDAISM...OR DID THEY NEVER LEAVE IT?

The picture of the early church in the book of Acts is devastating to the Gentile Christian Church; not only that it contrasts and conflicts with in across the board "theologically" Pauline Christianity, but Christian scholars have not been able to deny that the Jerusalem Church, under the leadership of James, consisted of practising Jews, loyal to the Torah. Many have attempted to explain this fact by the concept of re-Judaization or a return to Judaism from a more "Pauline-like" religious position which these Apostles' supposedly arrived at from the influence of Paul's teachings. The imagination of Pauline supporters seems without bounds. We are expected to believe that Jesus followers, family, and Apostles slipped back into Judaism after having departed from it, despite the contrary teaching of Jesus that he had not come to change the Law (Matt. 5:17). This is the only ploy at hand for many Christian scholars and authors in trying to explain why Jesus' Church and Apostles never accepted Pauline doctrine or Paul's "gospel" as depicted in the early chapters of Acts. We are expected to believe that somewhere they had left Judaism for the truth but now the story picks up after they repented of Gentile Christian doctrine and beliefs as taught by Paul and had come back to Judaism. If this idea can be believed by you then I want to sell you some tickets on the Titanic!

We have seen that attempts to by-pass the Jerusalem Nazarenes by constructing a different tradition linking Jesus to Paul (through the Hellenists and Stephen) fail under examination. Similarly, scholars have attempted to explain away all the evidence in the Gospels that Jesus himself was a loyal adherent of the Torah by the same concept of "re-Judaization:" when, for example, Jesus is represented in Matthew as saying, "If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Law's demands, and teaches others to do the same, he will have the lowest place in the kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Law and teaches others so, will stand high in the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:19). This is explained as not something that Jesus said, but something that was inserted into the text of Matthew by a "re-Judaizer." Since the Gospel of Matthew contains quite a number of such sayings, the Gospel as a whole has been characterized by some Christian scholars as a re-Judaizing Gospel, written specifically for a Jewish Christian community. This premise is absolutely false because any semi-serious study of the Gospel of Matthew will reveal beyond any doubt that this gospel was written by a non-Jewish writer due to all the internal evidences and errors contained within it that a 5 year old Jewish child would not have made if he had written it originally. So this argument again does not hold water.

**Several honest scholars, however, in recent years, have come to see that this position is untenable. For the main tendency and standpoint of the Gospel of Matthew is far from supporting the continuing validity of Judaism or of the Jews as the chosen people of God. Passages such as the parable of the vineyard (Matthew 21:33-43) preach the incorrigible sinfulness of the Jews and their supersession by the Gentiles. It is Matthew that stresses, perhaps more than any other Gospel, the alleged curse that has come upon the Jews because of their crime of deicide: e.g. Matthew 23:33-36, "on you will fall the guilt of all the innocent blood spilt on the ground," and Matthew 27:26, "His blood be on us, and on our children."** Such anathematization of the Jews is hardly consistent with loyalty to the Torah, which declares the Jews to be God's priestly nation for ever. No Jewish Christian community would assent to the statements quoted.

Consequently, if the Gospel of Matthew contains assertions by Jesus about the validity of the Torah, this is strong evidence that Jesus actually made these assertions, for only a persistent and unquenchable tradition that Jesus said these things would have induced the author of the Gospel to include such recalcitrant material, going against the grain of his own narrative and standpoint.

If Jesus himself was an adherent of the Torah, there was no need for re-Judaization or a return to the Torah on the part of the Nazarenes in Jerusalem, who were simply continuing the attitudes of Jesus. But, in any case, several scholars have now come to think that the loyalty of the Jerusalem movement to the Torah is itself strong evidence that Jesus was similarly loyal. It is, after all, implausible, to say the least, that the close followers of Jesus, his companions during his lifetime, led by his brother, should have so misunderstood him that they reversed his views immediately after his death. The "stupidity" motif characterizing the disciples in the Gospels is best understood as a Pauline attempt to explain away the attachment of the "Jerusalem Church" to Judaism, rather than as historical obtuseness.

**Though the concept of re-Judaization has become distinctly suspect in relation to the Gospels and to the Jerusalem followers of Jesus, it does not appear to have occurred to scholars to reconsider it in relation to certain groups for whom our evidence is later. We know of a number of Jewish Christian groups or sects which existed in the first four centuries of the Christian era, the best known being the Ebionites. The evidence about these groups is scanty and sometimes contradictory; but our understanding of Jewish Christianity may be furthered by a willingness to criticize the assumption that they were essentially and invariably re-Judaizing sects, falling away from Pauline Christianity and "relapsing" into Judaism.** It may well be that some, at least, of these groups were genuine historical continuations of the Nazarene community led by James and Peter, and were thus closer in spirit to Jesus than the official Catholic Church based on the teachings of Paul. This being so, we must be alert and inclined to listen to what they

had to say about the background and life of Paul with more attention, since they may have had access, through their unbroken tradition, with the origins of the Christian religion and its earliest conflicts.

# THE EBIONITES AND NAZARENES...& RESISTANCE TO PAUL

**The "Jerusalem Church" itself has a sad history. This has been obscured by the Church legend, found in Eusebius and later in Epiphanius, that before the Jewish War against Rome broke out in AD 66 the whole Nazarene community, warned by an oracle, left Jerusalem and went to Pella in Transjordania. "The flight to Pella" is merely a legend has been well demonstrated by S. F. G. Brandon, and confirmed by later research. The Jerusalem Nazarenes never left the city at the time of the Jewish War; they stayed there and played their part, as loyal Jews, in the fight against Rome. When the Jews were broken by the Romans and their Temple destroyed in AD 70, the Jewish Christians shared in the horrors of the defeat, and the Jerusalem Nazarenes were dispersed to Caesarea and other cities, even as far as Alexandria in Egypt. Its power and influence as the Mother Church and centre of the Jesus movement was ended; and the Pauline Christian movement, which up to AD 66 had been struggling to survive against the strong disapproval of Jerusalem, now began to make great headway. It was not until nearly seventy years later that a Christian Church was reconstituted in Jerusalem, after the city had been devastated by the Romans for the second time (after the Bar Kokhba revolt) and rebuilt as a Gentile city called Aelia Capitolina.** This new Gentile Pauline Christian Church in Jerusalem had no continuity with the early "Jerusalem Church" led by James. Its members were Gentiles, as Eusebius testifies, and its doctrines were those of Pauline Christianity. It attempted, however, to claim continuity with the early "Jerusalem Church," in accordance with the Pauline policy (evinced in the New Testament book of Acts) of denying the rift between Paul and the Jerusalem elders. **The Pella legend was developed in order to give color to this alleged continuity, since some of the members of the new Church had come from Pella. Jerusalem, however, never regained its former centrality.** In the now dominant Pauline Christian Church, the centre was Rome; while the descendants of the former proud "Jerusalem Church," now scattered and poor (for which reason, probably, they acquired the nickname of "Ebionites," from the Hebrew *evyonim*, meaning "poor men") were despised as heretics, since they refused to accept the doctrines of Paul.

**Another name by which these later Jewish Christians were known, according to the Church historians, was** "Nazarenes." **This name goes back to very early times, for it is found in the New Testament itself, not only applying to Jesus ("Jesus the Nazarene") but also (Acts 24:5) to the members of the "Jerusalem Church," in the denunciation by the High Priest.** It seems, then, that "Nazarenes" was the original name for the followers of Jesus; **the name "Christians" was a later development, not in Jerusalem but in Antioch (Acts 11:26). In the Jewish rabbinical writings, the name used for Jesusμ followers is similar to "Nazarenes," i.e.** notzerim. **Whether this name is derived from Jesus' place of birth, Nazareth, or from some other source, is a matter of scholarly debate. But it is clear that the survival of this name in sects of the third and fourth centuries points to continuity between these sects and the original followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Various theories have been put forward as to why some Jewish Christian sects were called Nazarenes, while others were called Ebionites. The best solution seems to be that the original name was Nazarenes, but at some point they were given the name Ebionites, as a derogatory nickname, which, however, some of them adopted with pride, since its meaning, "poor men," was a reminder of Jesus' saying, "Blessed are the poor," and also of his and James' sayings against the rich.**

**Nevertheless, it does seem from the rather confused accounts given by the Church historians that the Jewish Christians, as time went on, split into various sects, some of which strayed far from the tenets of the original**

**Nazarenes. Thus we read of certain Gnostic Ebionites, of whom the founding father was Cerinthus, who combined belief in the humanity of Jesus and in the validity of the Torah with a Gnostic belief in a Demiurge ("creator") and a High God. We also read of certain Nazarenes who believed in the Torah, but also believed in the virgin birth of Jesus and in his divine nature. These sects, however, arose by attrition of the original beliefs of the Nazarenes; for the isolation of the Nazarenes from both Christianity and Judaism subjected them to pressures which could give rise to some strange mixed or synthetic forms.**

# WHAT DID THE EARLIEST JEWS BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS?

**In general, however, the Nazarenes or Ebionites held fast to their original beliefs which we find mentioned again and again in our Christian sources:**

- **That Jesus was a human being,**
- **born by natural process from Joseph and Mary;**
- **That he was given prophetic powers by God;**
- **That he was an observant Jew, loyal to the Torah, which he did not abrogate and which was, therefore, still fully valid;**
- **His message had been distorted and perverted by Paul, whose visions were deluded, and who had falsely represented Jesus as having abrogated the Torah.**

**In view of the thesis, argued earlier, that the Nazarenes were a monarchical movement (family leadership and succession of leadership within the family) of which James was the Prince Regent and Jesus the awaited King, we may ask whether there is evidence that the Nazarenes or Ebionites of later times looked upon Jesus as their King. Most of our Christian sources do not mention this aspect. Instead, they stress that the Ebionites, while insisting that Jesus was no more than a man, achieved prophetic status by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, which was identical with "the Christ," a divine power. Of course, the Gentile Christian historians who wrote these accounts were strongly affected by the Pauline Christian definition of the word "Christ," by which it lost its original Jewish monarchical meaning and became a divine title (partly because it became assimilated, in the Hellenistic mind, to the Greek word *chrestos*, meaning "good," which was a common appellation of divine figures in the mystery religions). Apart from this inauthentic use of the word "Christ," the accounts ring true; for the idea that prophecy is attained by the descent upon a human being of a divine force (called in the Jewish sources "the Holy Spirit" or *ru ah ha-qodesh,* or sometimes the *shelchinah* or indwelling presence of God) is common in Judaism, and must have been shared by the Ebionites. But the monarchical overtones of the word "Christ" (Hebrew *Messiah)* are lost in most of these Christian accounts. Where the monarchical aspect reappears, however, is in the occasional mention of the millenarian or chiliastic beliefs of the Ebionites, who believed that Jesus, on his return, would reign for a thousand years on Earth. Here the concept of Jesus as King of the Jews (and by virtue of the priest role of the Jewish nation) spiritual King of the whole world is clear, and the Ebionites are shown to regard Jesus as the successor of David and Solomon. The thousand-year reign does not point to a concept of Jesus as a supernatural being, but reflects the common idea that human longevity in Messianic times would recover its antediluvian dimension.**

**Of course, millenarian beliefs are not entirely lacking in Pauline Christianity, too, where they have a curiously subterranean role. The Book of Revelation, originally a Jewish Christian work but much edited, was included in the New Testament canon, and from this stemmed millenarian beliefs which are somewhat hard to reconcile with Pauline Christology. The belief in the thousand-year earthly reign of a kingly Jesus at the end of days inspired many movements of political revolt within Christendom and often threatened the domination of the Pope and the Emperor, for inherent in these beliefs was the notion that justice is attainable on Earth and that the kingdom of God is an earthly Utopia, not an other-worldly condition of blessedness. The role of Antichrist, the earthly power opposed to Jesus *redivivus,* was usually assigned to the Jews, so that populist millenarian movements were often viciously anti-Semitic; but occasionally, the Antichrist was identified instead as the real oppressors of the poor and on these occasions the political aspirations derived from Judaism and from Jewish**

**Christianity threatened to perform a role of liberation in Christendom, in contrast to the other-worldly Paulinist theology which always worked on the side of the powers that be. It is not surprising that Popes and Emperors have always deprecated millenarianism, despite its New Testament authority, and excluded it from official Christian doctrine. In the beliefs of the Ebionites, however, it plays a natural and integral part, and helps to characterize Ebionitism as continuous with Judaism, as well as with the "Jerusalem Church" led by James, the brother of Jesus.**

## PROPHET AND MESSIAH ALL IN ONE?

**The prophetic role assigned to Jesus by the Ebionites also deserves some comment. Even in the New Testament, there is much evidence that Jesus, in his own eyes and in those of his followers, had the status of a prophet. Thus some of his followers regarded him as the reincarnation of the prophet Elijah, with whom John the Baptist had also been identified. Many scholars maintain that Jesus saw himself, at first, as a prophet foretelling the coming of the Messiah, and it was only at a fairly late stage of his career that he had came to the conviction that he was himself the Messiah whom he had been prophesying. Jesus then, according to these scholars, combined the roles of prophet and Messiah. This was not unprecedented, for his ancestors David and Solomon were also regarded in Jewish tradition as endowed with the Holy Spirit, which had enabled them to write inspired works. We need only look to David who is regarded as the author of most of the Psalms, and Solomon who is credited with the canonical works, Proverbs, Ecciesiastes and the Song of Songs. Nevertheless, these works were not regarded as having the highest degree of inspiration, and were included in the section of the Bible known as the "Writings," not that known as the "Prophets." Jesus was not the author of inspired writings, but he belonged, in his own eyes, to the ranks of the non-literary, wonder-working prophets such as Elijah and Elisha. Such a prophet had never before combined his prophetic office with the position Messiah or King, but there was nothing heretical about the idea that the Messiah could be a prophet too. Such a possibility is envisaged in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, where the Messiah is described as an inspired person and as having miraculous powers, like a prophet.This assumption of a prophetic role distinguished Jesus from the more humdrum Messiah figures of his period such as Judas of Galilee or, later, Bar Kokhba (though it seems that Theudas also sought to combine the two roles). Thus the Ebionite belief that Jesus had the status of a prophet was not at all inconsistent with their belief that he was the King of Israel, who would restore the Jewish monarchy on his return. To be both king and prophet meant that Jesus was not just an interim Messiah, like Bar Kokhba, sent to deliver the Jews from another wave of Gentile oppression, but the final, culminating Messiah, who would inaugurate the kingdom of God on Earth, as envisaged by the Hebrew prophets, a time of worldwide peace and justice, when the knowledge of God would cover the Earth "as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).**

## THE REJECTION OF THE EBIONITES BY THEIR FELLOW JEWS

**On the other hand, this belief in Jesus as an inspired prophet is what ultimately cut off the Ebionites from the main body of Judaism. As long as Jesus was alive his claim to prophetic and Messianic status was not in any way heretical; Pharisee leaders such as Gamaliel were prepared to see how Jesus' claims would turn out in actuality and meanwhile would suspend judgment: in Gamaliel's phrase, "if this idea of theirs or its execution is of human origin, it will collapse; but if it is from God, you will never be able to put them down, and you risk finding yourselves at war with God" (Acts 5:39). Even after Jesus' death, for some considerable time, the Pharisees, in view of the Nazarene claim that Jesus' movement had not yet "collapsed," Jesus being still alive and on the point of return, would be prepared to suspend judgment, as evidenced by Gamaliel, who was speaking after the death of Jesus. But as time went on, these Nazarene claims would wear very thin as far as the main body of the Jewish community was concerned. How long did one have to wait in order to reach a decision that the Nazarene movement had collapsed? Jesus had failed by being crucified, and the assurance by the Nazarenes that he would return had not been fulfilled. The conclusion reached by most Jews, therefore, was that Jesus was just another failed Messiah. As for his alleged prophetic powers, these must have been delusions. He was not after all a genuine prophet or his prophecies about himself would have been fulfilled. The Ebionites, however, still**

refused to accept this conclusion; though no doubt some of them, weary of waiting for Jesusµ return, went back to the fold of normative Judaism and gave up their belief in Jesus as Messiah and prophet. The remaining Ebionites, while still loyal to the Torah, built up an additional scripture or gospel (unfortunately now lost, having been suppressed by the Pauline Christian Church together with the other Ebionite writings), in which they set down the sayings of Jesus, who, to them, was just as inspired as Isaiah or Jeremiah and therefore deserved to be included in the canon. This new scripture, for the main body of the Jews, was a heretical addition to the canon of holy writ, and its appearance marked out the Ebionites as a heretical Jewish sect, like the Samaritans and the Sadducees. **Moreover, since the Ebionites thought that the age of prophecy had returned in the person of Jesus, they cannot have been willing to accept the authority of the Pharisee sages who built up a corpus of teachings after Jesus' death, on the assumption that the age of prophecy was over, having ceased with the last of the biblical prophets, Malachi. Thus the Ebionites, by their continued belief in Jesus as prophet and Messiah, were increasingly cut off from the developing activity of rabbinical Judaism. Yet it was probably not until about AD 135 that the Ebionites were finally declared heretics by the Pharisee rabbis. This decision was no doubt influenced by the awareness of the rabbis that the Gentile branch of Christianity, following the teachings of Paul, had abrogated the Torah and developed anti-Semitic attitudes. This was the conclusive proof that Jesus' claim to Messiahship had not been "from God."** Gentile Christianity, however, unlike Ebionite Christianity, was never declared heretical, since it was too far removed from Judaism to be regarded as a heretical form of it.

The Ebionites were thus in the unhappy position of being ostracized both by what was now the main body of Christians, the Catholic Church, and by the Jews. The pressure to join one or other of these two religions was enormous, and by the fourth century the Ebionites had ceased to be a discernible separate community. Consequently, they have tended to be disregarded and despised by historians. Yet what remains of their testimony about the origins of Christianity is of unique importance, for, unlike the Catholic Church, they were directly linked to the "Jerusalem Churchµ and thus to Jesus himself. Their testimony about Paul and the circumstances in which he broke with the "Jerusalem Church" deserves to be treated with respect, not with the usual scornful dismissal.

# THE EBIONITE LEGACY...THEIR WRITINGS

**The testimony of the Ebionites has been preserved in two forms.**

- Firstly, there are the summaries, already mentioned, of Ebionite beliefs found in the writings of the Church authors Justin Martyr (second century), Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Tertullian (end of the second century and the first half of the third), Origen (middle of the third century), and Epiphanius and Jerome (fourth century). These all confirm that the Ebionites opposed Paul as a false apostle.
- The second type of testimony is more indirect, depending on the detective work of modern scholars, yet it is very convincing. Certain texts which have been handed down from the ancient world and the early middle ages are ostensibly not writings of the Ebionites, but of other religious groups; but the painstaking analysis of scholars has shown that embedded in each of these works is a stratum written by an Ebionite author, which has been taken over and adapted by a non-Ebionite author. The two examples that are most pertinent here (since they show how the Ebionites thought of Paul) are the following.
    - ## The Pseudo-Glementine writings:

*These writings were preserved as orthodox patristic works because they were falsely attributed to the authorship of Pope Clement I, who was popularly supposed to have been a disciple of Peter himself. In fact, the core of these writings, as was pointed out by F. C. Baur in the nineteenth century and as*

*most scholars now agree (after an interim of dispute and denigration of Baur's work), is Jewish Christian or Ebionite, stemming from second-century Syria. This core shows a staunch adherence to the Torah, and contains an impassioned attack on those who attributed anti-Torah views to Peter. Paul is not mentioned by name, but he is strongly hinted at as the supreme enemy under the disguise of "Simon Magus," against whom Peter is represented as polemicizing. Peter's attack on this lightly disguised Paul is on the grounds that he is a false prophet, that he has spread lies about Peter and, most telling of all, that he knows nothing about the true teachings of Jesus, since he never met him in the flesh and bases his ideas of Jesus on delusive visions. That this "Simon Magus" is really Paul is now accepted by scholars, despite many desperate attempts to resist this conclusion made by critics of Baur who realized how profound would be the consequences of such an admission. For it shows that Paul, far from being a unanimously accepted pillar of the Church, like Peter, was a controversial figure, whose role in the founding of Christianity was a subject of great contention.*

- ## The Arabic manuscript discovered by Shlomo Pines.

*Some interesting evidence of the views of the Jewish Christian community of Syria at a later date, probably the fifth century, was discovered by the Israeli scholar Shlomo Pines. While studying a tenth-century Arabic work by "Abd al-Jabbar in a manuscript in Istanbul, he was able to prove that one section of this work had actually been incorporated from a Jewish Christian source. The standpoint of this incorporated section is that of the Ebionites: belief in the continuing validity of the Torah, insistence on the human status of Jesus as a prophet, and strong opposition to Paul as the falsifier of Jesus' teachings. According to this source, Paul abandoned the observance of the Torah mainly in order to obtain the backing of Rome and achieve power and influence for himself. Paul is even held responsible for the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, since his anti-Jewish propaganda inflamed the Romans against the Jews. His Christianity, says this source, was "Romanismμ; instead of converting Romans into Christians, he converted Christians into Romans.*

*Now over the years my research has thrown a terrific amount of light upon the Gospels and their unreliability as documents that correctly and truthfully transmit the truth about Jesus. This is not just my opinion but is born out by the investigative research of many scholars that precede me. This Jewish Christian source, as found by Pines, also contains some acute criticism of the Gospels, which it declares to be untrustworthy and self-contradictory. The only trustworthy Gospel, it declares, was the original one written in Hebrew, yet it is doubtful whether the community which produced this source still possessed a copy of this original Gospel. One of the source's remarks on the Gospel stories of Jesus' alleged abrogation of the laws of the Torah is of special interest. It relates to the corn-plucking incident, which it explains as a case of dire emergency due to the state of starvation of the disciples; and the technical phrase in Arabic used to explain the legality of the corn-plucking is a direct translation of the Hebrew piqquah nefesh ("the saving of a soul"), used in the Talmud in connection with the abrogation of the sabbath law in cases of danger to human life.*

**In general, the picture emerging from this text is of a Jewish Christian community, in the fifth century, out of touch in many ways with its own sources and barely managing to preserve an underground existence, yet still clinging to elements of belief deriving from centuries earlier and, at certain points, still linked to the earliest Jewish Christians of all, the Jerusalem Nazarene community of James and Peter.**

**The Ebionites did not survive for the simple reason that they were persecuted out of existence by the Gentile**

**Catholic Church. When this oppression was lifted for any reason (for example, when an area changed from Christian to Muslim rule), they sometimes came out of hiding and resumed an open existence. There is even evidence, from the works of the Jewish philosopher Saadia, that this happened as late as the tenth century. Mostly, however, the Ebionites were forced to assume a protective disguise of orthodoxy, and in time this led to complete assimilation. Yet, while they still retained their clandestine beliefs, they often had a profound influence on Christianity in general; there is reason to believe that many Judaizing heresies in Christian history, including Arianism, derived from underground Ebionite groups. Their influence was in the direction of humanism and this-worldly concern, and against the meek acceptance of slavery and oppression, and they had a restraining influence on Christian anti-Semitism. They represented an alternative tradition in Christianity that never quite died out. When ones studies out the truth from the legends of the Council of Nicea you will find that the Arians had the majority views on the "Christology" of Jesus which was very Jewish but as history bears out for us they ended up on the losing end. The whole world lost this battle and since that time Christianity has been deeply enmeshed in idolatry because of Constantine and the Athansius victory over the Arians. Ironically, the Church was to recant their stance on this major position and reinstate Arius and his "Christology" as the dominant one but he died in route to his "vindication." The history of Christianity is so sad.**

**The Ebionites are thus by no means a negligible or derisory group. Their claim to represent the original teaching of Jesus has to be taken seriously. It is quite wrong, therefore, to dismiss what they had to say about Paul as unworthy of attention.**

## EPIPHANIUS...A CHRISTIAN HISTORIAN WHO TOLD THE TRUTH AND IS DISCREDITED FOR IT TODAY

**Let us look, then, more carefully at the earliest extant formulation of the Ebionite view of Paul, found in the works of Epiphanius (fourth century).**

***"They declare that he (Paul) was a Greek . . . He went up to Jerusalem, they say, and when he had spent some time there, he was seized with a passion to marry the daughter of the priest. For this reason he became a proselyte and was circumcised. Then, when he failed to get the girl, he flew into a rage and wrote against circumcision and against the sabbath and the Law" (Epiphanius, Panarion, 30.16. 6- 9).***

**The above is the account of what Epiphanius declares the Ebionites were saying in the fourth century and is colored both by Epiphanius's hostility to the Ebionites and by the Ebionites' hostility to Paul. Nevertheless, there is a core here that may well be true.**

**Two elements in particular in the story have been shown in our previous discussions to be important:**

**that Paul was a "Greek" (i.e. a Hellenistic Gentile),**

**That he was involved with the High Priest (here simply called "the priest"). A third authentic element may be detected: a failure by Paul to achieve an ambition, and his consequent desertion of the High Priest and involvement with the Jesus movement.**

**The picture of Paul as a disappointed lover is a typical creation of the folk imagination, yet it is not entirely off the mark. Paul was indeed in love, not with the High Priest's daughter, but with Judaism, of which the High**

**Priest was the symbol (if not the exponent). It was Paul's frustrated love-affair with Judaism that created Pauline Christianity (Maccoby, The Mythmaker, p. 182-183).**

**The High Priest was indeed the key person in Paul's life: his employer when he harassed the Nazarenes, his enemy when he abandoned his attachment to the High Priest's collaborationist regime by his defection at Damascus, and again his deadly enemy when he escaped from the hostility of the Nazarenes into the custody of the Roman police.**

**Epiphanius's account is clearly incomplete, for it contains no reference to Paul's relations with the Jerusalem Nazarenes. The Ebionites of Epiphanius's day must have had some view about how Paul stood with James and Peter.**

***Yet, incomplete and romanticized as Epiphanius' account is, it is in several respects more accurate than the account of Paul that was handed down by the Catholic Church or even than the account that Paul gives of himself in his Epistles.***

***Instead of the respectable Pharisee of unimpeachable Jewish descent, the friend and peer of James and Peter, we can sense through Epiphanius's account something of the real Paul - the harassed false apostle, threading his way by guile through a series of stormy episodes, and setting up a form of religion that was his own individual creation.***

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# WHO ARE THE EBIONITES AND WHAT SHOULD THEY MEAN TO THE CHRISTIAN?

**The doctrine of Trinity, which is one of the fundamental constituents of Christian dogma, was absent from Christianity during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. The maximum one can grant is that this doctrine started taking shape after the Crucifixion. It took many centuries for it to reach its final well-defined but inexplicable form. It went through a long process of extremely bitter and controversial debates between Christian theologians and philosophers representing different religious, cultural and traditional backgrounds.**

**It was greatly influenced by the myths and the traditions of various lands which hosted "Christianity" in its early period. The main stem of Christianity, however, which took care of and nurtured the development of "Christian beliefs" and philosophy in its early formative part was of Jewish stock. Jewish influence remained predominant throughout the early part of Christian history. The disciples of Jesus who were instructed and understood Messianic Judaism (Christianity) directly from Jesus and witnessed it in the form of his life, belonged to this stock. They were the primary custodians of Christianity with deeply embedded roots in the holy soil of Jesus' instructions and way of life. It was they who witnessed the Crucifixion and had seen Jesus after the crucifixion.**

## THE FIRST JEWISH FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

**Early Christians (Jew and Gentile) appear to have been fundamentally divided over both the nature of Jesus and whether to adhere to the Mosaic Law or not. In the second phase of Christian development (after 50 C.E.), St. Paul became the most pivotal character in giving Christianity a new philosophy and ideology and was primarily responsible for this confusion concerning Jesus and the role of the Law following Jesus' death. Besides that the very message of Jesus was to be compromised by Paul in his mission to the non-Jewish world. These variations from accepted basic Biblical Judaism will cause continual contention between James and the Jerusalem Church and Paul as can be seen throughout the New Testament. To say it mildy there were serious fundamental differences of religious beliefs between Paul and James the Righteous. James was concerned that the message of Jesus was being compromised and changed by the preaching of Paul. While James primarily looked after the Jerusalem Church, Paul was preaching in the West, particularly to the Gentiles. But events would occur that would make James have the pleasure of Paul's presence in Jerusalem on two different occasions in order to rectify the problems concerning Paul and "his gospel." When it was all said and done the Western Church evolved along Pauline doctrinal lines, whereas the Church in Jerusalem developed along monotheistic teachings.**

**One offshoot of James' ministry were the Ebionites, a sect whose name derives from the Hebrew "ebionim" meaning 'the meek' or 'the poor'. They were the Jewish Christians, for whom Jesus was looked to by them with Messianic hope for their nation. They hoped that in Jesus they would realize the Messianic hope of Israel, but they held no beliefs that Jesus was some sort of 'Son of God' in some Greek way of thinking where he was "deity in the flesh." There is a big difference between "son of God" in Jewish understanding and "Son of God"**

**in Gentile theology. They followed the Mosaic law with great zeal, and had their own "Gospel" known in various contexts as the 'Gospel of the Hebrews', 'Gospel of the Ebionites' or the 'Gospel of the Nazarenes'.**

**In his book The History of the Church written in the 4th century AD in Caesarea, Eusebius mentions the Ebionites in the book Vespasian to Trajan. Eusebius, the most renowned church historian, mocks the Ebionite views (remember he is a Gentile in the Western Church), saying that their name comes from their poor and "mean" opinion of Jesus. That comment of Eusebius is typical of Gentile fathers of the early church and shows perfectly how the Gentiles are incapable of understanding correctly let alone conveying the truth of the Jews let alone interpret their writings and their culture at such an early date. Such is the blindness of anti-semitism that shaped the early centuries of the Gentile Church.**

**According to Eusebius, the Ebionites regarded Jesus as mortal (human and not divine) and esteemed him as righteous through the growth of his character (notice these earliest Jewish believers held no ideas of any "incarnation" or that Jesus as God in any way). . As Jews, the Ebionites observed the Sabbath; every detail of the Law, and did not accept the Pauline idea of salvation through faith alone.**

**Eusebius also talks of another group of Ebionites (that would develop somewhat later under Essene influence of the Angel Messiah) who accepted the virgin birth and the Holy Spirit, but refused to accept Jesus' pre-existence as "God the Word and Wisdom". They followed a 'Gospel of the Hebrews' which could possibly have been St Matthew's Gospel (written in Hebrew but lost to us today). They observed the Sabbath and the Jewish system, but celebrated the resurrection.**

**In his book describing the background of the Ebionites, R Eisenman in The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered writes that James (the 'Zaddik' or 'Zadok', meaning Righteous) was the leader of the Jerusalem Church in the middle of the first century (40-60 AD approx.) The branch which was retrospectively called Jewish Christianity in Palestine. The Ebionites developed from this branch.**

**The Community who followed James were known as 'the Poor', (Galatians 2:10, James 2:3-5) a designation mentioned both in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. In many ways, Eisenman feels that the Ebionites were similar to the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They honored James the Righteous, and believed Jesus to be their mortal Messiah, while Paul had become an "Apostate from the Law". They observed the Law and the Sabbath with great zeal.**

**They earliest Jewish follower of Jesus held James in the highest regard, while Paul was considered 'The Enemy' as spoken and warned of by Yeshua (Matt 13:24-43):**

***Matt 13:24 (KJV) Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. 31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. 33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. {measures: the word in the Greek is a measure containing about a peck and a half, wanting a little more than a pint} 34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: 35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. 36 Then***

***Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one]; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; {things...: or, scandals} 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.***

**Thus according to the Jewish Christians, or Yeshua's church, Paul was one who deviated from the Mosaic Laws and Commandments and was as far as they were concerned the "adversary" (devil). This may be hard for Christians to understand, yet believe considering what you have heard taught from pulpits Sunday through Sunday your whole life, but what you have heard does not change the facts that have surfaced from both archeology and in-depth Bible study. Somewhere you have to come to terms with James and the early church's view of Paul as handed down to us for those who wish to inquire. One cannot discount their extra-Biblical writings that have come down to us that severely impugn the "Gospel" Paul preached to Gentiles, and this explains his resentment to the apostles in Jerusalem as recorded in the epistles (reputed pillars...note the sarcasm in his tone when addressing the leadership of Jesus' church) in Galatians chapter 2. When you study out this passage in it's historical context you see clearly that this is Paul's defense of his theological position after the Acts 15 Church Council where James ruled the day. But make no mistake about it; the subject of the following tirade by Paul was against the Jerusalem church and it's apostolic leadership because they censured Paul and would do so again in Acts 21. The message of the Jesus, the Jerusalem Church, and the Ebionites was not to be changed or destroyed. It was the hope for the world.**

***Gal 2:4-9 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. (KJV)*** **You must remember that this is Paul's self-vindication of his position to the Gentiles of Asia Minor (who knew nothing of the events of Acts 15 and the Jerusalem Council) and his presentation of the events of Acts 15 where the Laws of God were reinforced for Gentile inclusion into the Israel of God. In fact James said these "Law" of the Covenant of Noah were "necessary" and "seemed good to them and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 15:28-31).**

**Acts 15:28-31 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you (the Gentiles) no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. 30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: 31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. (KJV)**

**Well they all "rejoiced" but one. This does not set well with Paul and with his "under grace, not under the Law" message owing to his special revelation about Jesus. But it seems odd to me that the rest of the church of Jerusalem did not share in Paul's understanding of Jesus or his death as they**

**continued to bring blood sacrifices and atonement offerings long after Jesus' death (Acts 21 and Numbers 6). Again we see that they did not share in, what Paul will say, "my gospel."**

***Acts 21:23-24 23 Do therefore this (instructions to Paul from James the leader of the chruch) that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow (Nazarite) on them; 24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them (means buy their sacrifices for them), that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. (KJV)***

**What is important for our study here is that when you study out the passage in Number chapter 6 regarding the Nazarite vow that requirements of this vow require animal sacrifice, blood offerings, and atonements offerings through blood sacrifice. Notice if you will that this event in Acts 21 occurred around 60 A.D. which is roughly 30 years after Jesus' death and we find the leader and hand picked pastor of Jesus' church instructing that this be done and such instruction is given to Paul no less who obliges. Evidently what we have been taught about Jesus' death being the final sacrifice for sin was not something that James and the Jerusalem church believed and it was these people again let me remind you that knew Jesus best. Even Paul was forced to obey the Torah even though when thousands of miles away he will preach his own version of a "Torahless Gospel" and lead the Gentiles to believe that "his gospel" was what Jesus and the Jerusalem Church supported. Now you see that they did not! These were the earliest Jews who often are connected with the Ebonites. This event helps show us what these Ebionites believed about Jesus and his death.**

**According to Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln in The Messianic Legacy, the source of the original teachings of the Ebionites, Gnostics, Manicheans, Sabians, Mandeans, Nestorians and Elkasites has been described as the Nazarene philosophy. They refer to Nazarene thought as: "An orientation towards Jesus and his teachings which derives ultimately from the original Nazarene position, as articulated by Jesus himself, then propagated by James, Jude or Judas Thomas and their immediate entourage." Their basic beliefs were:**

- **1). strict adherence to the Mosaic Law**
- **2). recognition of Jesus as Messiah**
- **3). belief in the normal human birth of Jesus**
- **4). hostility towards Pauline views**

**There is a collection of Arabic manuscripts kept in a library in Istanbul which contains quotes from a 5th or 6th Century text ascribed to the `al-nasara', written in Syriac and found in a monastery in Khuzistan in south-west Iran near the Iraq border. It reflects the views of the Nazarene hierarchy escaping from Jerusalem after the destruction in 66 AD. It refers to Jesus as a human being and stresses the Judaic Law (notice that this is the belief of the first century church and those closest to the historical Jesus).**

**The inescapable conclusion of the scrupulous student of history, language, and Scripture is that Paul's followers "abandoned the religion of Christ and turned towards the religious doctrines of the Romans."**

**Of all the various doctrines which evolved during the formative stages of Christianity, only those who believed in the Nazarene philosophy can justifiably be given preference. These early Christians were taught the meaning of Christianity by Jesus himself.**

# THE ROLE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL....APOSTATE?

**From the time of St Paul onwards, as Christianity spread to alien lands and pagan faiths within the Roman Empire, it began to be powerfully influenced and bent by the cultures and mythologies prevalent in those lands and went further away from its nascent purity. St Paul did his bit in influencing the deterioration of the**

"original Christian thought" by introducing his own brand of mysticism. He was neither of Jewish stock (Gentile convert to Judaism) nor did he have any direct contact with Jesus, except through his claimed vision. He was already, it seems, under the powerful influence of the alien cultures.

**Apparently there were two options available to St Paul, either to fight the strenuous battles against a world of superstitions, myths and legends prevalent in the lands of the Roman Empire from times immemorial or to give in to them and let Christianity change to suit their requirements and ambitions. This gave the Gentiles the message that Christianity was not essentially different from their legends and myths.** Paul only recast Biblical Judaism in terminology which was already familiar to the Gentile to whom he preached. **Thus Paul found the adoption of the second option far more profitable and convenient and let Christianity change to suit the ambitions and philosophies popular in the gentile world.**

**This strategy worked well in as much as it gained a great number of converts to the new faith which otherwise would not have been easily available. But at what cost? Unfortunately, it ended up only in an unholy competition between noble Christian values and pagan myths.** What St Paul changed was only the names of the pagan gods and replaced them with Jesus, God the Father and the Holy Ghost. It was not him in fact who invented the myth of Trinity and introduced it to the pagan world in the name of Christianity, on the contrary he borrowed the myth of the Trinity from pagan mythology and bonded it to Christianity. From then on it was the same old paganism but with new names and new faces. Instead of the message of Jesus going into all the world we have Paul's special revelation "gospel" about Jesus that went into all the world. Paul's gospel was not the same as Yeshua's gospel.

Pauline Christianity, therefore, did not succeed in changing the doctrines, myths and superstitions of the pagan world but only ended in changing "original Christianity" (Messianic Judaism) in accordance with them. If the mountain did not respond to his call, he decided to go to the mountain.

# THE REALITY OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

**Of course it is anybody's prerogative to choose between Pauline Christianity and that of James the Righteous and other early leaders of Christianity who were the disciples of Jesus Christ himself.** But here we want to establish the point that the main stock of Christianity continued to develop along Jewish lines and kept itself aloof from the later innovations which generated the rigmarole and complexities of Christian dogmas we see today for Gentile imaginations such as the godhead of Jesus as the Son, the Trinity, Inherited Sin, Redemption, the rejection and replacement of Israel by the church, etc. **The views of the early leaders of the original Church, among whom James the Righteous was prominent, were simple and honest and had no internal contradictions or paradoxes hiding behind a smoke screen of mystery as we confront today in the Pauline churches of our land. A study of the history of Judaism in Christianity establishes beyond question the fact that the Unity of God, uncomplicated by the slogan of Trinity, remained the official doctrine of the true Church of Christ in its pristine purity.** The faith of Yeshua was Jewish, is Jewish, and will always remain Jewish. It is us who need to reevaluate what we have been taught and believe in light of fact and reason.

Please remember that this short treatise is not an attempt to convert Christians to any faith other than that of the faith both held and practiced by Yeshua (Jesus). It is simply a genuine effort to invite the Christians back to the pure unadulterated faith and practice of Jesus himself. It is a sincere attempt to revert the fiction back to the facts of Christianity. Facts that are certainly as beautiful as they are realistic and satisfy both the head and the heart.

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# PAUL'S GOSPEL: A SYNTHESIS OF GNOSTICISM, MYSTERY RELIGIONS, AND JUDAISM

The truth, however, as we have seen if you have kept up with the prior articles in this series and on this website, is that Jesus did not found a new religion at all, but simply sought to play an accepted role in the story of an existing religion, Judaism. As a prophet a would-be Messiah Jesus dies with Israel failing to merit the Kingdom of Heaven. Israel, failing to rise to her calling as a holy nation and a Royal Priesthood to the world, not only postpones the manifestation of the Kingdom of Heaven's appearance but her king as well. Jesus, a good Jew, lived and breathed Judaism and gave his life for it's futherment. Never did it ever enter into his mind one time that Biblical Judaism was not the way for mankind; both Jew and non-Jew. For Jesus there was no need for a "second" religion; the problem was not with Judaism but with men's hearts. **It was Paul who founded the replacement religion known as Christianity today, and he did so by creating a new story which really was not "new" at all; rather, it was a unique synthesis of "old" stories that had a unique appeal to almost everyone...except the Jews of course. Paul's new synthesis, his new story, was one sufficiently powerful and gripping to launch a new world religion among the non-Jews. In this new story Jesus was given a leading role, but this does not make Jesus the creator of Christianity.**

## THE DESCENT OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR....

The basic theme in the Pauline religious synthesis and religious myth can be summed up in one phrase: **the descent of the divine savior**. Everything in the so-called theology stems from this: for since salvation or or rescue comes from above, no capability or potential can be ascribed to the action or initiative of man to improve his situation. Man is totally helpless and undone without any actions that can be taken by him to even "work out" his salvation as a co-partner with God. Understand right now that this is not Biblical Judaism, this is not the message of Moses and the Prophets, and this is not the message taught by Jesus as well! In fact such ideas as taught by Paul totally contradicts the Torah. In Judaism man and God work together in salvation. One has to look to **Gnosticism** and other forms of dualism for such ideas of the utter incapability of man to be co-partners with God in salvation!

Inherent in such Gnostic beliefs is embedded the idea of **predestination.** **Thus some kind of doctrine of predestination follows: when the divine rescuer and savior descends, he does not look to see who "deserves" to be rescued, because this would be to ascribe some kind of saving efficacy to something that man does by his own effort, whatever he does that comprises deservedness.**

**Answer for yourself: Since in Gnosticism we find the divine descent of the savior who has of course by necessity no human birth, then did this Gnostic belief coupled with the virgin-born sun-godmen of the mystery religions help explain why Paul, who wrote 2/3 of the New Testament, does not mention at all anything about Jesus' childhood or his birth?**

**Answer for yourself: Could this descent of the divine savior of Gnosticism (the pattern first applied to Jesus by Paul) help explain why the "infancy narratives" do not appear until almost 200 A.D. among the New Testament writings and also help explain why the first New Testament collected did not have such "infancy narratives" and "genealogies" as we find today in Matt. and Luke (remember Paul's writings were first and had a major influence upon the Gentile writers of the New Testament)? You bet it does! Only later when Christian Gnosticism was waining in popularity with the ascendancy of Western Christianity was there a need to explain away Gnostic Christianity's view of Jesus as a descending Gnostic savior and give him a "birth." This explains why there were no accounts written of the early years of Jesus until almost 200 A.D. and such efforts were directly to counteract Gnostic beliefs concerning Jesus as their divine savior who was not "flesh" but pure spirit. One only has to see passages like the following to understand how early Christianity struggled over whether Jesus had a body of flesh (human) or that he only seemed to have a body of flesh but was really only a spiritual apparition (Gnosticism).**

***I Jn 4:2 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (KJV)***

**Back to our point according to Paul's theology mankind can do nothing to be a co-laborer with God in working out his own salvation as no flesh will be justified in the sight of God by any action on the part of mankind.**

***Rom 3:20 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: That being the case one only could wonder as to how anyone could know who will be rescued and saved? The answer is simple. There was no way to know. Those will be rescued whom the saviour has decided to rescue and save.**

**Answer for yourself: What, then, can we do to be rescued? Nothing, except to have "faith!"**

**Answer for yourself: What does this mean? It means to rely entirely on the descending saviour, and to abandon every other hope of rescue. But surely even to have an attitude of faith requires some kind of effort, and, if so, not everything is contributed by the saviour. This is perplexing to theologians who struggle with this paradox; but the basic thing is still the story: rescue comes from above.**

## THE DESCENT OF THE SAVIOR FROM "ABOVE" REVEALS TWO REALMS OF EXISTENCE...ONE ABOVE/ONE BELOW

**The descent of the divine savior implies other narrative elements. It means that there are two realms, Above a Below: Above is the region of Light, and below a religion of Darkness, the dark prison from which we need to be rescued and from no one belonging to Below can release us. Thus no Below-type act of liberation can do us any good, no transfer from one area to another. What imprisons us is the human condition, which is one of bondage to the powers of Evil.**

**Answer for yourself: Since the realm of "below," where mankind is born, lives, and dies, is Evil there had to be a reason for the existence of this "Evil." Do you what was developed to explain the existence of this "Evil" we find below? The doctrine of Original Sin.**

**Answer for yourself: Can we find the doctrine of Original Sin in Moses, the Prophets, Biblical Judaism, or the teachings of Jesus? No! That is not to say we cannot find "sin" in the Old Testament but along with it comes "free will" where man is called to choose "Godliness."**

**As stated, from this aspect of the story comes naturally the doctrine of Original Sin, a re-reading of Paul of the Hebrew story about the ejection of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, which in the story itself, and its**

traditional Jewish exegesis, did not have this radical connotation.

**Answer for yourself: Does it not strike you rather funny that Paul, a Pharisee of Pharisees and a supposed student of the great Gamaliel, is teaching a doctrine that is totally foreign to Biblical Judaism and it's exegesis of it's own faith?**

So far the story as laid out in this article so far is the same as that found in the type of religion known as Gnosticism. **Recent discoveries have shown contrary to what was previously argued,** Gnosticism existed before Christianity, though it later took Christian forms. **Thee essence of the Gnostic myth was that this world is in the grip of evil, and therefore** a visitor (or a series of visitors) is necessary from the world of Light, in order to impart the secret knowledge (gnosis) by which some privileged souls may escape from the enslavement of the world. **In Gnosticism, this world is regarded as so evil that it cannot have been created by the God (the good God). It was created by a limited or evil power called the Demiurge (creator otherwise known as the God of the Jews [YHVH]). ). The true High God lives in a region beyond the skies, but he has pity on humanity and sends them an emissary to teach them how to free themselves from the Demiurge.** In some Gnostic sects the Demiurge is identified with the God of the Jews, and it was thought that the Jewish Scripture, the Torah, was given by this evil deity. **The Jews were therefore regarded by these sects as the special people of the Demiurge and as having the role in history of blocking the saving work of the emissaries of the High God.** While anti-Semitism (in the sense of intense dislike of Jews) was not uncommon in the ancient world, it was probably among the Gnostic sects that the most radical form of anti-Semitism originated - the view that the Jews are the representatives of this cosmic evil and this evil God, the people of the Devil.

## PAUL'S GOSPEL IS GNOSTIC TO THE CORE....WE DON'T KNOW THIS BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT GNOSTICISM TODAY

Paul's Epistles show a form of Gnosticism which is overlooked by 95% of Christiendom if not more simply for the reason that we are 2000 years removed from Gnosticism and we fail, when reading Paul, to recognize it's main doctrines in the Pauline writings. What makes it even more complicated again is the Christian's almost total lack of understanding of what both Biblical Judaism of the first century as well as the mystery religions actually taught. When you add these three "deficiencies" together the normative Christian is incapable of reading the New Testament and being able to separate out what Jesus the Jew would have believed from the Gnosticism and the Mystery religious doctrines in the New Testament. Lacking such information that only comes from a dedicated time of serious study the Christian is relegated to reading all that is in the New Testament and the Pauline writings and "accepting by faith" that what he is reading is a faithful representation of the Jesus of history. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!

As stated above in summary fashion the problem is that when encountering Paul we find a rather complicated and unique synthesis of all three of these world views from the first century. The Pauline corpus of literature in the New Testament is an amalgamation of all three world views: Judaism, Gnosticism, and Mystery Religions. Understand that this had never been done before Paul; he was the originator of this "new" world religion and his efforts has blurred almost beyond recognition the true Jesus of history. Therefore, the Pauline "religious beliefs system" and his "Christian myth and synthesis" is worth isolating, though it is combined with other, non-Gnostic mythological elements (Judaism and mystery religions). **The basic perception of Gnosticism is certainly present in Paul: that this world is so sunk in evil that rescue from above is a necessity (Rom. 7).**

*Rom 7:24-25 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. (KJV)*

**But Paul's Gnosticism is not without some quirks. The mythological details of Gnosticism are modified in Paul's unique synthesis of these three world views. Paul does not think that this world was actually created by an evil power; he accepts the account of Genesis that the world was created by God (YHVH). In this he maintains Judaism's account of creation. But, unlike Judaism and the religion of Jesus, Paul believes, as does Gnosticism, that the world has come under the control of an evil power; the Earth is captured territory. This is why there can be no hope of salvation except from outside or "above."**

**The importance of the concept of an evil power or the Devil in Paul's thought, or rather mythology, cannot be overestimated and here again we find Paul departing from Biblical Judaism and what the Jewish Scriptures teach about Satan. When referring to this power, he generally uses expressions derived from Gnosticism rather than from Judaism. Thus Paul gives the picture of the assault of cosmic evil powers on Jesus in these words:**

*1 Cor 2:8 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (KJV)*

**The expression "princes of this world" does not refer to earthly rulers such as the Romans or the High Priest, but to supernatural powers who rule over "this world" in the sense of "this cosmic era." Likewise, Paul uses the expression "principalities and powers" and other such expressions with Gnostic connections to**

*Rom 8:38 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (KJV) refer to the supernatural forces that oppose Jesus and himself (e.g. Romans 8: 38).*

**On one occasion, Paul even calls the supreme evil force a "god" (2 Corinthians 4:4).**

*2 Cor 4:4 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (KJV)*

**Paul thus thinks of the forces of evil as organized in a hierarch (typical of Gnosticism again) and as having power independent of God, at least for a period in cosmic history. For Paul, it was primarily to break the power of these forces that Jesus came to the world; though the earthly power that opposed him, that of the Jews, who seemed to be his main enemies, was only on the surface, for he was engaged, in reality, in a vast cosmic struggle in which his earthly antagonists were the pawns of evil supernatural forces. This is the core of Gnostic thought and let me again stress that this is not Biblical Judaism. The Persian and Gnostic religious beliefs are the origin for Paul's statements. Again this is a perfect example of Paul's synthesis of various world views in his presentation of his unique Gospel.**

*Rom 16:25 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, (KJV)*

**One thing is for certain that Paul gets correct; it surely is a mystery all right because he was the first to conceive "this mystery" and relate it to others. I cannot stress enough the uniqueness of Paul's invention. It never seems to amaze me how as Christians we can think that the Jesus of the New Testament was believed to have come with a Divine and Unique revelation from God when what Paul teaches about him was previously known and applied to various other godmen throughout recorded history. If**

anything the Pauline Jesus is a clone...in reality a tri-clops (three world views rolled into one man).

**Even Iranian religion, from which the dualism of the Gnostics was ultimately derived, the evil supernatural power was regarded as inferior to the good power in that good would ultimately prevail. So Paul's dualism is hardly less extreme than that of Iranian or Gnostic religion. It has been argued recently that Paul derived this dualism from Jewish, not Hellenistic, sources since the Jewish Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical books do give an important role to Satan; and the Qumran writings of the Dead Sea also ascribe much of the evil in the world to the activities of an evil angel called Balial. These writings, of course, were excluded from the canon of scripture by the Pharisees, who strongly opposed dualism and regarded Satan as merely one of God's angels, who did not rebel against Him, but obeys his orders, whether the Angel of Death or as prosecutor of human beings in the divine court. Even in purely Jewish terms, Paul's dualism would exclude him from the Pharisee mode of thought. But in any case, there is a great difference between Paul's dualism and that of the Jewish writings mentioned, which, though affected by despair, never descend to the depths out of which Paul's writings spring. Though the Jewish Psedepigrapha and Qumran writings have a sense of cosmic evil, they still believe in the efficacy of the Torah and of the election of Israel; they do not require a savior from the upper world in order to make human life workable.**

**If as a Christian you have thoroughly read and understand Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings correctly, then you know that God has said the same thing throughout the Jewish Scriptures and that is this: That it is through the practice of the Torah (faith in God and intense desire and effort to respond in love to Him through obedience to the Commandments and Laws of God) that the power of evil is eventually broken in men's flesh and the world (training in obedience); and this means that the exercise of human will to good is still the most important factor in history.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this what Paul teaches in his epistles? NO!**

**Paul takes a completely different approach as seen in the utter helplessness of mankind to remedy evil in this world (Rom. 7).**

**Rom 7:15-24 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (KJV)**

**The scene of the battle between good and evil is still within the human psyche, not removed to the skies with humans as helpless and passive reflections of the conflict. On the contrary, the battle that goes on between supernatural powers is a reflection of the battle on Earth; and the outcome of this battle will be a transformation of the Earth, not an organized escape from it (rapture).**

No plausible Jewish model can be found for Paul's type of dualism; the only contemporary parallel is in Gnosticism. There are some differences, of course, but even in the differences we note a basic similarity; and here we must bear in mind that there were many varieties of Gnosticism, and that the central doctrine of the evil of this world and the need for extraterrestrial salvation could receive an almost infinitely varied mythological elaboration. Paul's variety does not include the notions that the evil power created the world and the Torah; but it contains notions that perform the same kind of

function.

## THE TORAH PRESENTS A CHALLENGE FOR PAUL...HE HAS TO DISCREDIT THE TORAH AND HE DOES

Paul belongs to the kind of Gnosticism that was fascinated by the Jews and Judaism, and sought to weave them both into its pattern, usually with anti-Semitic effect (the Jews are the people of the bad God-creator of matter...and the recipients of the Torah which also finds it's origin with this bad God-creator). The Torah, in this kind of scheme, is acknowledged to be of supernatural origin, but it comes from the wrong supernatural source. Yet the Torah, for this kind of Gnostic, contains a secret message: despite itself, it gives information about the tradition of the "true gnosis." Over and against the official tradition contained in the Hebrew Bible there are hints of an alternative tradition, by-passing the authority of the Jews and Judaism. Thus we find the Gnostics concentrating on figures in the Torah who are not Jews, but who nevertheless seem to have authority: such as Seth, the son of Adam born after the murder of Abel by Cain; or Enoch, reputed to have been taken alive into heaven; or Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High who was not of the Jewish Levitical priesthood. Paul does the same thing in choosing "Abraham" as his paradigm of faith and will use him in selling his theology to the Gentile world. On figures such as these it was possible to construct the fantasy of an alternative tradition, stemming not from the Jewish God, but from the High God above whose message far transcended Judaism. In order to present this "alternative tradition" it was necessary to discredit the origin of the Torah and Paul is up for the task.

## PAUL CHANGES THE ORIGIN OF THE TORAH

**Now this is important that we understand what comes next. Paul, as previously noted, was not your normal gnostic. He did not adopt the Gnostic myth of the creation of the world by the Demiurge; but he adopted the almost equivalent myth of the "rule of this age," the evil power who had taken over the world, though he did not create it. Likewise,** Paul did not adopt the Gnostic myth that the Torah was given by an evil power and was thus an evil work; instead, he introduced the view that the Torah was a work of limited authority. Giving mythical expression to this view, Paul asserted that the Torah was given not by God, but by angels and not God (again Gnosticism is heavily "angel" centered). This demotion of the status of the Torah is seen in Paul's epistle to the Galatians:

*Gal 3:19-20 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator (Moses). 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. (KJV)*

**Various scholars have tried to argue that the Jewish sources contain the notion that the Torah was given by angels, not by God, and that therefore Paul was not saying anything startling or new in this passage. If the Torah was "ordained" by angels that means that they originated it, while if they only "promulgated" it, it may have or originated from God.** Despite the convoluted arguments of scholars, there is no parallel to Paul's idea that the Torah was given by angels in Jewish sources, which all insist that God was the sole author of the Torah and that was God Himself, not angels, whose voice was heard on Mount Sinai "giving" the Torah. Again we find religious ideas of Paul that lie completely outside of Biblical Judaism.

**Answer for yourself: Where did Paul get his conflicting ideas that the Torah was given by angels and not God?**

The only parallel to Paul's statement is to be found in the Gnostic literature which states that the Torah was given by an inferior power, the Demiurge. Paul is thus adapting the Gnostic doctrine of the

inferiority of the Torah: instead of being ordained by an inferior and also evil power, it is ordained by inferior but beneficent powers. This is in accordance with Paul's view of the Torah as merely temporary and as foreshadowing something greater than would supersede it, the advent of the descending gnostic savior. The other two references to the angels as authors of the Torah in the New Testament (Acts 7:53 and Hebrews 2:2) are simply based on Paul's statement here. Paul was the sole creator of this myth about the angels fathering the Torah. Here again we encounter the pressure that exists in the Christian tradition and scholarship to deprive Paul of his originality as the inventor of Christianity.

## FOR PAUL THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WAS SUPERIOR TO THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

**The "intermediary" to whom Paul refers is Moses, but his remark that "an intermediary is not needed for one party acting alone, and God is one" is somewhat cryptic. The best explanation seems to be that Paul is pointing out that the Torah constitutes a covenant or contract between two parties, God and Israel. God's pronouncement of blessings to Abraham, on the other hand, was one-sided, with Abraham as passive recipient, required only to have "faith": consequently no "intermediary" was needed. This one-sided conferring of blessing is, for Paul, a far superior and more immediate form of communication between man and God, reflecting again the Gnostic belief in the helpless state of man, utterly dependent on salvation from above. Paul thus rejects as inferior the Jewish concept of the human nature, by which the Torah constitutes a covenant and agreement between two partners, God and Israel.** If you have ever studied Covenants for yourself you find that God's Covenants are successive and greater as time goes on. Basically they are cumulative and each in succession has greater responsibilities and greater blessings. To say that the rudimentary Covenant with Abraham was superior to later Covenants which God made with His people destroys the whole idea of progressive revelation and again is a totally false idea as presented by Paul.

## PAUL'S USE OF ABRAHAM IN SCRIPTURE...AND HE GETS IT WRONG AGAIN

**Paul's use of Abraham his discussion in Galatians and elsewhere is interesting in context of our consideration of his affinity to Gnosticism. We have seen that the Gnostics used non-Jewish biblical characters such as Seth, Enoch and Melchizedek as alleged representatives of alternative traditions of "gnosis." Paul uses Abraham in just the same way.** Abraham, though the ancestor of the Israelites, was also the ancestor of other nations and was a pre-Mosaic figure not involved with the Torah. **For Paul the use of Abraham as his "pattern" for his gospel of "faith" was necessary because Paul used Abraham in shadowing the obsolescence of the Torah even before it was given. This trend is developed in the Epistle to the Hebrews (written by a later disciple of Paul, though wrongly attributed to Paul himself by Church tradition), where the figure of Melchizedek is used in the same way, to show that there is an alternative priesthood, superior to that of the Jewish Aaronites. These "characters" are used by Paul because for him they lived in an era before the "Torah." Their example was used to promote the idea of "faith" without the Torah as being acceptable to God which is what Paul is teaching in the New Testament as again the Torah was not necessary any longer because since a product of the "bad-creator-god." However Paul again gets his theology wrong as attested by the following verse:**

***Gen 26:5 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. (KJV)***

**Notice with me the word "law" in the above verse [Strong's number 8451 towrah or torah- law, direction, instruction**

- a) instruction, direction (human or divine)
  - 1) the body of prophetic teaching
  - 2) instruction in the Messianic age
  - 3) the body of priestly direction or instruction
  - 4) the body of legal directives
- b) law
  - 1) law of the burnt-offering
  - 2) used of special law, codes of law
- c) custom, manner
- d) the Deuteronomic or Mosaic Law

**As you can see Paul again is wrong because every Covenant that God has ever made with man contains God's admonitions for mankind in the form of commandments and laws which are literally Covenant stipulations that is required of man. Mankind's honoring of them through obedience always brings the blessings of the Covenant and his disobedience always brings chastisement. This means dear reader that Paul's use of Abraham is totally discredited in trying to present a case of "faith only" as the way to please God!**

**This use of non-Jewish figures from the Bible (Abraham) by Paul, so reminiscent of Gnosticism, is not, however, the main strategy of Paul and of the Pauline Church with regard to the Hebrew Bible. The Gnostics regarded themselves as outsiders and outside mainline Judaism to say the least. Therefore it was necessary to construct an "outsider" tradition from biblical materials so they choose for their examples of their plain non-Jewish people before the giving of the Torah in Scripture. Thus the use of Abraham by Paul repeatedly throughout the epistles. In so doing they were rejecting the main line of the biblical story as concerned with the people of the Demiurge (YHVH). Basically they sought to change the Biblical revelation and the Biblical story. Paul, however, and the Christian tradition that followed him, adopted a much bolder line. He asserted that all the main prophets of the Hebrew Bible were proto-Christians. For Paul none of them (not even Moses) had regarded the Torah as permanently binding; all of them, according to Paul, had looked forward to the advent of the saviour who would abolish the Torah and show the true way of faith and salvation through "faith" in this special "knowledge" that this descending savior would bring (faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of this dying descending savior for salvation).**

**This Pauline "gospel" amounted to a wholesale repudiation of the Jewish religiohistorical scheme since time began let alone the messages of Moses, the Prophets, the writings, and the teachings of Jesus! Everything up to now according to Paul was wrong and had to be replaced with his "gospel."**

**Alterations of this kind were not unique to Paul, who accepted the Old Testament in full as the word of God, but instead he imported his own meanings into it, and turned it into a coded message of the Pauline mythology. In this way, the succession of Hebrew prophets was put into the place of the succession of "outsiders' bearing "gnosis," envisaged by the Gnostic exegetes of the Bible. Moses and the prophets were now the outsiders, because they knew the Christian meaning of their message, which was rejected by the Jews, who insisted on the permanence of the Torah and treated the prophets as they later treated Jesus. The division between Jews and outsiders is retained, as in Gnosticism, but the lines are differently drawn, with the result that Pauline Christianity, instead of opposing prophetic Judaism, appropriated it for its own purposes.**

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# PAUL'S ANTI-LAW BIAS....REVEALED IN DETAIL

**A short summary of Gnosticism is necessary before we can begin examining the reasons for Paul's anti-Law bias in the New Testament.**

## GNOSTICISM AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FLAWED CREATION...THE BLAMING OF GOD FOR EVIL

**Religions agree that man and the world are imperfect. Where they differ is in the explanation why they are so, and in what they propose to be done about it. Generally speaking, man is held to blame for the situation. Religions often relate that there was a time of harmony, peace and perfection; with man, God and nature coexisting in blissful symbiosis. It is always man who disrupts and spoils the idyllic state, either from within the system by eating forbidden fruit or otherwise asserting his independent free will, or from the outside by infiltrating it and bring in his wake disorder, disease, death, greed and violence. There is, however, an alternate view, namely that the world was imperfect from the start, that such a world was full of evil and suffering and death, that the blame for such an imperfect creation lies not with man, but with God, the Creator. Thus we find in Gnosticism such an idea that this world of evil and suffering was the work of an incompetent deity who is usually identified as the God of the Jews of the Bible. He is know as YHVH (Jehovah).**

**Stated thus baldly, the above scenario that the Creator of the Bible is an incompetent deity seems a merely perverse idea, or an attempt to exonerate human iniquity by putting the blame on God. But the gnostic argument is not so awkward. It maintains that the true God is beyond the created universe and quite alien to it. This transcendent God does not, and never did, act, in the sense of willing something and bringing it about. To begin to understand Gnosticism we have to substitute the idea of divine emanation, or "bringing forth," for the idea of divine action. There are many variations of the basic gnostic creation myth, as we shall see in due course, and the following brief summary should be regarded as typical rather than as fundamental and general. But what we must understand is that in the New Testament Paul is not always the typical Gnostic in that he borrows various Gnostic concepts when they suite his theology and at times refrains from using others so the Pauline Gnosticism of the New Testament is itself quite unique. As stated and proven, no only on this website but others, Paul drew heavily not only from Gnosticism but from mystery religions for his religious synthesis which in the final form was overlaid with historical Biblical Judaism. When we see all three together we see Paul's unique religious synthesis of Judaism, Gnosticism, and mystery religious in it's final form as a new religion known today as Christianity.**

**According to this Gnostic tradition in the beginning there existed only the transcendent God, a male principle that existed for eternities in repose with a female principle, the Ennoia (Thought), until there emanated or was brought forth from their union the two archetypes Mind (male) and Truth (female). In turn these principles emanated others, in male - female pairs to the total of thirty, known as Aeons, who collectively constituted the divine realm, known as the Pleroma, or Fullness. Of all the Aeons only the first, Mind, knew and comprehended the greatness of the Father and could behold him, but the last and youngest Aeon, Sophia (Wisdom), became**

**possessed of a passion to do so, and out of the agony of this passion and without the knowledge or consent of her male counterpart, she projected from her own being a flawed emanation.**

**This abortion, the "Demiurge," was the creator of the material cosmos and imagined himself to be the absolute God (YHVH). The cosmos that he created consisted of a number of spheres, each of which is ruled over by one of the lower powers, the Archons, who collectively govern man's world,, the earth, which is the lowest of the spheres of the degenerate creation.**

# GNOSTICISM'S DUALISM AND ANTITHESES

**Gnostic theology, cosmology and general philosophy espouse a radical dualism, which is aptly expressed by a symbolism of light and darkness. The divine realm is the realm of light, and the Aeons are Beings of light, in contradistinction to the darkness of the cosmic spheres and their rulers, the Archons. Good and evil, spirit and matter, flesh and spirit, knowledge and ignorance, are other antitheses correlated with the fundamental one of light and darkness. The gnostic verdict on the world is that it is the darkest dungeon of creation, the innermost of the cosmic spheres, where matter, evil and ignorance irredeemably prevail.**

**Man's nature, too, is dual, consisting of a perishable physical component and a spiritual component which is a fragment of the divine substance, or, to extend the light symbolism, a "divine spark." Man is generally ignorant of the spark of divinity that resides in him, and the Archons seek to keep him ignorant by encouraging and gratifying the physical appetites and passions of the "natural" man. Some Gnostics held that man was created for the express purpose of entrapping the divine spark, for if ever the divine substance is totally gathered into itself again the flawed cosmic creation, the domain of the Archons, will come to an end. When the divine spark is released from its corporeal prison by death, it will aspire to be reunited with the divine substance, but to attain reunion it must undertake a hazardous journey, traversing the spheres where the ever-vigilant Archons lie in wait to frustrate its efforts and to hurl it back, reincarnate, into the toils and bondage of the physical world.**

**Unawareness and ignorance (of the way to salvation) keep man in thrall to the Archons, it is knowledge (gnosis) alone that can liberate him and bring him salvation: knowledge of the transcendent God and of the divinity within, and also knowledge of the way to combat or outwit the Archons and enable the soul to achieve the reunion it yearns for. This saving knowledge cannot be discovered in the world, the realm of darkness. This saving knowledge must come from the realm of light, granted either by revelation (or illumination) or brought by a messenger seen as a divine savior, a transcendent saviour. For Paul this "saving knowledge" comes from a vision of the divine resurrected savior who had earlier descended into the world to share this "secret information" that allows mankind to escape his earthly prison.**

**There is an obvious elitism implicit in this. To be awakened to the existence of the divine spark within is in itself to be set apart from the majority of mankind, and actually to possess the gnosis is to attain a rare spiritual distinction (elect). Furthermore, the gnostic contempt for the material and physical world can easily be extended to contempt for human beings who do not see anything intrinsically wrong with the world, and the contempt for the Creator can result in the repudiation of moral principles and prohibitions and the assumption of a status above the law, where anything is permissible. It stands to reason that if the Creation is flawed because the Creator God is a impaired deity Himself, then all things connected to Him are equally flawed such as His Law, His Torah, and His people the Jews. Thus the need to do away with the Laws of YHVH as imperfect or temporary until a new Law can come in the form of the Law of the descending Gnostic savior. All creation is imperfect as is all flesh and salvation lies outside of anything the creation can possibly do to perfect or improve itself (mankind). Adherence to the Laws of God (YHVH) is utterly useless in improving man's condition and any idea of being a co-laborer with God in the salvation process was totally alien to Gnosticism.**

The basic theme in the Pauline religious synthesis and religious myth can be summed up in one phrase: the descent of the divine savior. Everything in the so-called theology stems from this: for since salvation or or rescue comes from above, no capability or potential can be ascribed to the action or initiative of man to improve his situation. Man is totally helpless and undone without any actions that can be taken by him to even "work out" his salvation as a co-partner with God. Understand right now that this is not Biblical Judaism, this is not the message of Moses and the Prophets, and this is not the message taught by Jesus as well! In fact such ideas as taught by Paul totally contradicts the Torah. In Judaism man and God work together in salvation. One has to look to Gnosticism and other forms of dualism for such ideas of the utter incapability of man to be co-partners with God in salvation!

So far the story as laid out in these articles concerning Paul so far is the same as that found in the type of religion known as Gnosticism. **Recent discoveries have shown contrary to what was previously argued,** Gnosticism existed before Christianity, though it later took Christian forms. **The essence of the Gnostic myth was that this world is in the grip of evil; an evil that could not be the result of a good God who was responsible for the creation of all things. In order to explain such evil various theories were created to explain the existence of evil. One system of religious thought that gave answers to this perplexing problem is called Gnosticism and we find in the New Testament that Paul adopts many, but not all, of it's major tenants in the synthesis of "his gospel."**

**So fundament to Paul's unique blend of Gnosticism is the necessity of a savior who imparts to him this long awaited "divine gnosis" that now he alone can give mankind.** A visitor (or a series of visitors) is necessary from the world of Light, in order to impart the secret knowledge (gnosis) by which some privileged souls may escape from the enslavement of the world and their flesh.

**The basic theme in the Pauline religious synthesis and religious myth can be summed up in one phrase: the descent of the divine savior. Everything in the so-called theology stems from this: for since salvation or or rescue comes from above, no capability or potential can be ascribed to the action or initiative of man to improve his situation. Man is totally helpless and undone without any actions that can be taken by him to even "work out" his salvation as a co-partner with God. Understand right now that this is not Biblical Judaism, this is not the message of Moses and the Prophets, and this is not the message taught by Jesus as well! In fact such ideas as taught by Paul totally contradicts the Torah. In Judaism man and God work together in salvation. One has to look to Gnosticism and other forms of dualism for such ideas of the utter incapability of man to be co-partners with God in salvation!**

***Rom 7:24-25 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. (KJV)***

**In Gnosticism, this world is regarded as so evil that it cannot have been created by the God (the good God). It was created by a limited or evil power called the Demiurge (creator otherwise known as the God of the Jews [YHVH]). The true High God lives in a region beyond the skies, but he has pity on humanity and sends them an emissary to teach them how to free themselves from the Demiurge.** In some Gnostic sects the Demiurge is identified with the God of the Jews, and it was thought that the Jewish Scripture, the Torah, was given by this evil deity. **The Jews were therefore regarded by these sects as the special people of the Demiurge and as having the role in history of blocking the saving work of the emissaries of the High God.** While anti-Semitism (in the sense of intense dislike of Jews) was not uncommon in the ancient world, it was probably among the Gnostic sects that the most radical form of anti-

**Semitism originated - the view that the Jews are the representatives of this cosmic evil and this evil God, the people of the Devil.**

Therefore we find in Paul's theology the combined notions of the rejection of Law as connected with faith in one's salvation. Instead of faith and resultant obedience to the Torah we find for Paul a "faith" in his special gnosis obtained by special revelation from this divine savior which he later calls "his gospel." Paul substitutes salvation through faith and adherence to Covenant stipulations and Laws from YHVH to salvation obtained only through "faith" in the atoning power of the death, burial and resurrection of the descending gnostic savior (mixture of Gnosticism and mystery religions). Paul identifies this descending and dying savior with the Messiah of the Jews thus we have the tie in with Judaism. The synthesis is complete. Of course in Christianity today we don't refer to Jesus as such (as a Gnostic savior) as great attempts were later made by Rome to remove as many Gnostic references to "Christ" as possible. But if you are equipped with the background of Gnosticism before you read the New Testament you can pick out enough "markers" to see how the Jesus of the New Testament yet remains as a tragic mixture of both Judaism, mystery religions, and Gnosticism.

**Answer for yourself: What has happened to the human Davidic Messiah and where did he go?**

*2 Sam 7:12-13 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. (KJV)*

*2 Sam 7:16 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. (KJV)*

In complete denial of the Torah Paul teaches that humans are basically sinful and cannot be saved through their own merit. Only their "faith" in the passion of the crucifixion and the "Christ" event can achieve them. For Paul personally the Law is external to himself and to mankind. For Paul the Law tells them what to do, but does not transform them internally. This the Law was imperfect and only temporary until a new Law was to come as delivered and taught by the divine Gnostic spirit man whom only Paul saw and heard. We have in Paul not only the elitism of the Gnostics but the "secret" revelation that only the initiates who would later be "in Christ" would possess for Eternal Life where they were saved from this worldly existence and death. By combining the Messiah of Israel with the pagan forms of dying and resurrected sun-godmen of the mystery religions which was packaged in "special gospel revelation" to which only Paul was privy we have the perfect example of Paul's "gnosis." The initiates or "converts" partook of this "gospel" by not only coming to possession of this special knowledge about Jesus and his work in the world as interpreted by Paul but by identifying with him though immersion and taking the supper of the savior called the Eucharist where you were "in him and he in you." By faith you were "identified" with him by being crucified with him in his death and raised with him through your faith in a newness of life." The metamorphosis was complete; but only if you had faith in and obtained such special "gnosis;" without such "knowledge" you were lost.

**Sound familiar?**

# WE HAVE HEARD PAUL...NOT IT IS TIME FOR THE TORAH AND THE TANAKH

*Deut 7:12 12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto*

*thy fathers: (KJV)*

*Psalms 51:19 The sacrifices [acceptable to] God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.*

*I Samuel 15:22 And Samuel said: "Does the L-rd delight as much in your burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obedience to the voice of the L-rd? Behold, obedience is better than any sacrifice, and to comply [is better] than the fat of rams."*

*Jeremiah 36:3 Perhaps the House of Judah will hear all the evil I [God] intend to do to them, so that everyone may turn from his evil way and I may forgive their iniquity and sin.*

*Jonah 3:10 God saw their works that they turned from their evil way....*

*Isaiah 43 verses 21-26 Verse 23: Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured Me with thy sacrifices... Verse 24: ...thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities. Verse 25: I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins*.

**From this (above) we see that God, the Merciful One, wipes away sins from us with no apparent activity on our part (THINK).**

*Isaiah 45:25 In the L-rd shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. We can be justified, despite our sins, by being "in the L-rd."*

**Granted, this verse is open to interpretation, but to say that "in the L-rd" means that we must sacrifice sounds very forced. Not realistic.**

*Ezekiel 18:3-32 Verse 9: Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the L-rd God.*

**When reading this verse, remember**

*Ecc 7:20: For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*

**Obviously, the verse in Ezekiel is referring to a basically good person who really tries to follow God's commands and slips up every now and then. The verse says that he will live. He will NOT see eternal damnation or other such nonsense. Read it again just to be sure.**

*Verse 21: But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

*Verse 22: All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.*

*Verse 30: ...Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.*

*Verse 31: Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

***Verse 32: For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the L-rd God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.***

**Also read Ezekiel 33 10-20 which again goes through how God wants evil people to repent and makes no mention of sacrifices.**

**Answer for yourself: Reading all this, doesn't it strike you that the idea that God died on the cross so that we are forever forgiven for any sin is a rather absurd idea, especially when you do some homework and see that such a scenario is replete in pagan mystery religions since the beginning of time as seen in various forms of sun worship by primitive mankind as they came to believe that the "sun" (later to be the "son" of the "sun" was on the cross (made by intersections from the division of the zodiac into 4 seasons of the year)?**

**Answer for yourself: Does it make sense when reading the Bible Yeshua used, the Jewish Old Testament, that we can believe a message so contrary to the whole of the Old Testament; that man can be forgiven without any changes in his deeds? Even James says in the Christian Bible:**

***(James 2:20) But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?***

**We made the point in the prior article that for mainline Gnostics any type of Law, like the Law of Moses, was not to be esteemed because not only was it the product of the evil Creator God of the Jews (YHVH) but it's focus was upon the "flesh" of man and it's goal was the control of and discipline of the "flesh." This is understandable since all creation and all matter (flesh) was evil according to the Gnostics. Of course Paul modifies this somewhat as he does not maintain the Torah was given by a "bad-God" but yet still maintains the Torah's imperfectness and its temporary nature. Let us not forget that according to mainline Gnosticism we have two different Gods; a good God which transcends the bad-God who is the Creator of all matter and who has as His people the Jews. This bad-God Creator not only made this world which is full of evil and suffering but gave His Law to His people who we know as the Jews. For the Gnostics any and all things connected with this evil Creator-God (Demiurge) was evil (the Torah and the Jews). Any and all things from this God of the Jews was considered "evil" and the Torah was just as evil. We also pointed out that Paul was not your typical Gnostic in that he deviated from some of the basic Gnostic religious tenants such as his acknowledgment that the creation was not from this evil-God and the torah was not "evil" but only temporary. For Paul the Torah serves a temporary purpose as it revealed the "evil" in men's hearts and was to be abolished by the coming of the "descending Savior" whom upon his arrival would give a new law.**

***Gal 6:2 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. (KJV)***

# PAUL AND THIS TEMPORARY LAW

**Paul's attitude to the Torah must now be examined in order to show his affinity to Gnostic antinomianism [anti-Law]. It is the essence of Paul's religious stance that law cannot save; for if so, as he says, what need would there be for the sacrifice of Jesus? We find in Paul's teaching of the death and sacrifice of the descending Savior the combination of religious tenants of the mystery religions in combination with religious tenants of Gnosticism; both of which are lacking in Biblical Judaism. In Judaism, these alternatives are not even intelligible, since in Judaism the issue is not salvation at all, for one is saved merely by being in the covenant, and the issue is then to work together with God by implementing the Torah as the fruit of one's faith. For the Jews, only outrageously wilful behavior can jeopardize his condition of being "saved," and thus the expression "saved" is not even part of the Jewish religious vocabulary.**

For Paul, however, the human condition is desperate, and the only issue in life is salvation. **Therefore Law for Paul is secondary and irrelevant and behavior and obedience to the Torah has little importance when compared to "spiritual salvation" available only through acceptance of the special knowledge of the savior.** Now you can see why Paul only refers to two of Yeshua's teachings ( in 2/3 of the New Testament). Conduct, attitude, and behavior as modeled on the pattern of the Torah is not of primary importance for Paul since man is lost; he needs to be saved from this world by the "special gnosis" that is connected with the descending savior (such special knowledge that is in Paul's gospel). The purpose of the law or Torah, says Paul in Galatians and elsewhere, is not to teach us how to behave as much as it is to convince us of the desperate nature of our moral condition and situation.

***Rom 3:20 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (KJV)***

By giving us a model of what good and acceptable behavior would be, it shows us how incapable we are of such behavior in the evil state of human nature, and therefore impels us to seek a way of acquiring a new nature. The human condition much be changed, for as it is, it is not practicable.

***This attitude to law as taught by Paul in the New Testament corresponds to that of Gnosticism and not Biblical Judaism as evidence by the representative passages from the Torah and the Tanakh listed above***

## PAUL PUTS A TWIST UPON THE GNOSTIC VIEW OF LAW

**For in Gnosticism, too, the issue is not about how to behave, but salvation. On the other hand, there are some differences between an antinomianism of Paul and that of Gnosticism. The Gnostics did not merely despair of law, as Paul did; they actually despised law, as something essentially inferior to "gnosis." For law was indissolubly connected with the activities of the body, as opposed to the spirit (pneuma). The spiritual being, the "pneumatic," was above the operation of the moral law or, in the phrase of a modern thinker with some affinity to the Gnostics, Nietzsche, "beyond good and evil." Like Nietzsche, the Gnostics were led by this attitude to develop a human typology, by which only a minority of humanity was capable of true spirituality; most human beings were irretrievably bound to the body and materialism.** Paul too uses the expression "spirit" (pneuma) in ways analogous to the usage of the Gnostics; thus at times he suggests that only those already predisposed to the "spirit" can benefit by the sacrifice of Jesus, and here the tendency towards **predestination** inherent in Pauline doctrines is reinforced by a destiny of personality and character. **Yet Paul's attitude towards law itself is not straightforwardly Gnostic and is often contradictory!** At times, at any rate, he sees law, as supremely embodied in the Torah, as the ultimate goal, but one that cannot be realized except through "salvation" and rebirth. Only by being "born again" can this new nature achieve the goal of observing the Torah. And of course one, according to Paul, cannot be a "new creature" or "be born-again" unless they are recipients of the special knowledge that only Paul can impart from "his gospel." The Law for Paul only reinforced the utter helplessness of mankind to obtain salvation (Rom. 7) and the utter necessity for "his special gospel" about Jesus in order for mankind to be saved. If you were not in Paul's camp and possessed this special "gnosis" which only Paul had then you were lost!

**It has been argued that here Paul is merely echoing the thought of Rabbinical Judaism, which envisaged that in the World to Come, God would obliterate the "evil inclination," and mankind would be able to observe the Torah without psychological impediment or struggle. This is the concept formulated by the Prophet Ezekiel:**

***"I will give them a different heart and put a new spirit into them; I will take the heart of stone out of their bodies and give them a heart of flesh." (Ezek. 11:19).***

**The only difference between Paul and the rabbis is that Paul believed that the world to come had already arrived, with the advent of Jesus. By having "faith" in Jesus and sharing in his crucifixion, Paul believed, the "heart of stone" would be removed, and the Torah could be observed at last. This, however, is to misunderstand the subtlety of the rabbinical attitude in this matter. The rabbis did believe that the "evil inclination" would be obliterated finally, but this would be as a reward to humanity for its long struggle against evil. It was not the solution to the problem of sin, which was the task of this world and of humanity; it was the removal of the problem in order to reward mankind with a state of blessedness. Thus, the rabbis say in the Mishnah: "Better is one hour of repentance and good works in this world than the whole life of the world to come; ;and better is one hour of bliss in the world to come than the whole life of this world" (Mish. Avot. 4:17). This is an attitude that Paul could not understand. It shows a subtlety and maturity that contrasts strongly with Paul's adolescent despair and impatience for perfection (Rom. 7). For rabbis, the point of life is in the struggle, rather than in the reward. For Paul, the reward has become the indispensable substitute for the struggle, which he regards as hopeless and, therefore pointless. Again we have another example of a "Pharisee of Pharisees" gone wrong!**

**Thus, even when Paul is in the mood to occasionally take the Torah to be the true standard of moral behavior, he destroys its' efficacy: in a fallen state humanity cannot implement it, while in a "saved" state humanity does not need it, since its provisions then become second nature and are automatically obeyed. But Paul does not adopt his comparatively respectful attitude to the Torah consistently in the New Testament. Sometimes, especially when combating the influence of the Jerusalem Jesus Movement, he takes up an attitude of hostility to the Torah, berating it as materialistic and unspiritual, quite in the Gnostic vein. Thus he declares that those who wish to keep the sabbaths and festivals of the Torah are subservient to mean and beggarly spirits of the elements (Gal. 4:9), a Gnostic expression for the lower forces of nature. At times he seems to be saying that there is now a new law, called "the law of Christ," which has superseded the old law of the Torah, which has been abrogated and was always imperfect. But this is not just a matter of reform, for the new "law of Christ" operates in a different way, being based on grace and faith, not on works. Nor is it a matter of simply dropping ceremonial provisions of the old law, while retaining its moral provisions, for Paul introduces new ceremonies such as the Eucharist and Pauline Christianity has been, if anything, more fully equipped with ritual than Judaism ever was.**

# THE PARADOX OF PAUL'S STANCE ON THE LAW... CANNOT LIVE WITH IT...CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT IT

**The fact is that Paul, like all the Gnostics, is unable to fit law into his scheme of things intelligibly, and yet he has to try to do so, because law simply will not go away. All Gnostics wish to abolish law and to substitute for it some kind of instinctive, saved behavior that will fulfil all the demands of law without the necessity of having a law. But in practice things never work out in this way. People who are supposed to be "saved" behave, unaccountably, just as badly as before they were saved, so that law has to be reintroduced to restrain them. Also, there are always logically minded people to say that if they are "saved," all their behavior *must* be correct, so they can indulge in any kind of behavior that happens to appeal to them (such as sexual orgies or murder) in the confidence that nothing they do can be wrong. In other words, by being "saved," people may behave worse instead of better. Paul had to cope with this "saved" libertinism, and could only use the methods of moral exhortation that were supposed to have been made obsolete by faith and the transition from "works" to "grace." The epistle to Romans is full of such exhortation's against such sin and conduct. This is the paradox of Paul's stance on the Law...cannot live with it..cannot live without it! The same problem was felt throughout Gnosticism, as is shown by the Gnostic libertine sects such as the Carpocratians.**

Thus Paul's attitude of partly admitting the validity of law, under pressure, does not exclude him from the category of Gnosticism, as some have argued, for this compulsion to do something, however unwillingly, about fitting law into the scheme is common to all the Gnostic sects, each of which dealt with the matter in its own way. It is interesting to compare Valentinian Gnosticism, for example, with Pauline Christianity. Each, on the level of basic theory, is antinomian; but each provides a place for law out of practical necessity. This led to the ironic result, in Christianity, of the building up, eventually, of a huge body of canon law in a religion which began as a revolt against law. The new law was supposed to be fundamentally different from the old law of the Torah, being a law of grace, but in fact it was administered in exactly the same way, except that it lacked the humanity and sophistication which centuries of rabbinical development had given to the Torah.

# PAUL'S COMPROMISES WITH GNOSTICISM & HIS AMALGAMATION WITH MYSTERY RELIGIONS

Paul, by adopting the Gnostic myth of the descending savior, produced doctrines typical of Gnosticism in his dualism, his anti-Jewish use of the Jewish scripture and his antinomianism, though in each case, the more extreme forms of Gnosticism are excluded by Paul's acceptance of the Hebrew Bible as the word of God. He emerges from this this examination as a moderate Gnostic, but a Gnostic none the less. He does not represent the world as the creation of an evil God, nor does he say that the Torah emanated from an evil God, nor does he say that law is to be utterly condemned as a mere prescription for the body, but he has doctrines which are analogues of all these, adding up to a Gnostic system of salvation by a heavenly visitor...along the lines of the Essene angel-Messiah.

**Answer for yourself:** Why, then, did the Pauline Christian Church treat those Gnostic groups that attached themselves to Christianity as heretical?

This fact alone has led many scholars to argue that Pauline Christianity cannot be regarded as owing anything to Gnosticism. This conclusion, however, does not follow. For Pauline Christianity did not Consist of Gnosticism alone, but contained other important ingredients which the Gnostic Christians were not prepared to accept such as the blending in of pagan mystery religious concepts. It is the fusion of these other elements with Gnosticism and Judaism that constitutes the uniqueness of Paul's mythology. Paul did not invent any of the elements that went to make his mythology; what he did invent was the way in which all the elements were combined to make a new and powerful myth.

The chief non-Gnostic element was derived from the mystery religions. It was from the latter that Paul derived the idea of Jesus as a dying and resurrected god, who confers salvation and immortality through a mystic sharing in his death and resurrection. In the Gnostic myth, a bearer of "gnosis" may encounter hostility from the unspiritual followers of the Demiurge, and he may even be killed by them, but this is not the main purpose of his coming. His chief purpose is to bring the gnosis, which is the secret knowledge of a mystic or magical nature, by which the initiate can undertake the spiritual journey that takes him away from the domination of the lower powers. There is thus no "sacrificial" motif in Gnosticism. The saviour does not come to Earth to act as a sacrifice for mankind, but to bring them knowledge, if they are fit to receive it.

In Pauline Christianity, on the other hand, the gnosis which the saviour brings is nothing but the knowledge of the saving power of his own death. He functions as a sacrifice, but **only** if the initiate is aware of his sacrificial power and shares in it by "faith," in the saviour's sacrificial experience (crucified with Christ). This idea is derived wholly from the mystery cults, in which precisely the same mystery of sharing in the death and resurrection of the deity was central.

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**This explains why the Gnostic Christians were condemned as heretics, for they could never accept this sacrificial aspect of Pauline salvation doctrine (doctrines from mystery religions and sun-worship), the aspect derived from the various mystery cults. For these Christian Gnostics, Christ was a bringer of secret knowledge on how to obtain salvation from the evil world, not a sacrificial figure. They therefore denied that he ever died on the cross, saying that this was a mere appearance; consequently, their heresy was known as "Docetism," from a Greek word meaning "to appear" or "to seem." The Gnostics, with their radical opposition between spirit and matter, could not accept that Christ was material enough to undergo a sacrificial experience; that would argue that he had truly become flesh, for only the flesh could undergo such real suffering. But for Paul, it was essential that Christ should be a real sacrifice, not just a seeming one. Otherwise, the burden of sin, for which all mankind deserved death, could not be rolled away. Consequently, Christ had to be made sufficiently material to undergo such a death. The descent of the gnostic savior into matter was part of both myths; but for the Gnostics, this descent was sacrifice enough and was undertaken only because the imparting of gnosis would be impossible without it. But for Paul, with his mind full of sacrificial imagery, with his conviction of the saving power of the shedding of blood and the undergoing of torture (derived from his youthful experience of the horrific Attis cult), such bloodless imparting of secrets was unsatisfying. There had to be a cosmic agony to answer to the agony of his own soul. He therefore turned from the sophistication and intellectuality of the Gnostics to the primitive imagery of the mystery cults, derived from prehistoric rites of human sacrifice. The synthesis was begun for Paul and later applied to historical Judaism to give it a picture of respectability.**

**There was thus a real amalgamation in Paul's mind between Gnosticism and mystery religion, and this was unprecedented. From Gnosticism came the the picture of a world in hellish darkness, yearning for salvation, into which a figure descends from the world of light. This figure walks through the world dispensing cryptic saving wisdom, attracting a few, but surrounded by the forces of evil. From mystery religion comes the story of the death of the saviour: overwhelmed by the forces of evil, he suffers a cruel death, but this very death is the source of salvation, far more than anything he has taught (and what he has taught turns out to be only the saving efficacy of his coming death).**

**From mystery religion, too, comes the paradox of sacrificial salvation: that it is the result of the success of evil. Only because the forces of evil succeed in overwhelming the savior does salvation come to the world; because death must precede resurrection, and without death there can be no atonement for mankind, which can provide from it own number no person worthy of such a sacrificial function. So, in mystery religion, the dying and resurrected god has an evil opponent-the pattern originating from Set against Osiris-who is essential to the story, because without him there would be no salvation, through his lot is to be accursed and damned, his is the Evil Christ, who bears the sin of killing the Good Christ.**

**It must be emphasized that neither Gnosticism alone, nor mystery religion alone, could have produced this powerful myth. For Gnosticism is without the concept of the divine sacrifice. Mystery religion, on the other hand, is without several ingredients of the Pauline theology and myth. Mystery religion does not conceive the world as a dark hell into which the god descends nor does it conceive the salvation it offers as a rescue from hellish damnation. Typically, mystery religion offers immortality as a kind of bonus for initiates; those who are not initiates are not regarded as damned, but simply as having missed an extra benefit. It is the admixture of Gnosticism with its desperate situation of mankind and the world that adds urgency to the mystery religion initiation, giving the sense of escape from a terrible doom. Thus the element of incarnation is unimportant in mystery religion, though not entirely absent. Sometimes the god undergoes death (like Balder) without incarnation or descent to Earth. This is not because Pauline Christianity values the flesh more than mystery religion (as some Christian apologists have argued) but because the Gnostic descent into vile matter is essential to Paul in order that the sacrifice should be complete. It is because the world**

**is a hell which has to be afflicted that Christ descends into it, not because the flesh has to be beatified. Similarly, the insistence of Paul that Christ has to be really crucified, not apparently crucified as the Gnostics would have it, does not argue a higher valuation of the flesh by Paul, but rather a concern that the flesh should be thoroughly tortured and thus exorcised on behalf of mankind, whose own sufferings are not sufficient and who cannot be saved by mere enlightenment.**

# PAUL'S FINAL FUSION....ADD IT ALL TO JUDAISM

**The Pauline myth is however, composed merely of Gnosticism and mystery religion; a third ingredient was necessary to make it the most compelling myth known to mankind and that is the ingredient of Judaism. It was from Judaism that Paul added to his concoction the the dimension of history. Judaism contains a vast panorama of history from the creation of the world until the last days, and part of the impressiveness of Judaism to observers in the ancient world was its purposive scheme of history, quite different from the annalistic approach of Greek historians. Mystery religion was completely ahistorical; its offer of salvation was for the individual alone. Gnosticism, on the other hand, did have a historical scheme of a kind, parasitic on the Jewish scheme; the succession of outsiders, beginning with Seth, which provided a tradition of gnosis. But this was again individualistic, and provided little sense of the development of a community; indeed only the well-formulated community in the Gnostic scheme was that of the Demiurge, the Jews. Gnostic history was a kind of anti-history. Paul, however, bodily took over the whole Jewish scheme of history from Adam to the last days, as a framework for his story of salvation, which he conceived as working itself out through various epochs. The actual content of this historical framework, however, was not derived from Judaism. The Jewish myth of a liberated nation leaving Egypt and crossing the desert to the Promised Land - a paradigm of the political and social Utopianism of Judaism -did not touch Paul at all; instead, he converted it into a parable of his own scheme of salvation for the individual through the sacrifice of Christ. Yet his early admiration for Judaism prevented him from sinking into the quest for mere individual salvation; he conceived of the Church as a community moving through history, and to this end he incorporated the Jewish "promises" to Abraham as the rationale of a new "Israel" taking over the function of a chosen people. The incorporation of the Old Testament into the Christian canon ensured the future of Pauline Christianity as a solidly based human institution, as opposed to the evanescent Gnostic sects and the mystery cult secret societies.**

**The threefold synthesis of Judaism, Gnosticism, and mystery religion was not constructed consciously by Paul, but, sprang ready made into Paul's psyche on the road to Damascus, as the solution of tremendous poetic power, and its progress in the Greco-Roman world is not to be wondered at. Its chief ingredient are indeed Greco-Roman rather than Jewish, and its appeal was to the world-weary Hellenist, yearning for escape from disorientation and despair, not to the Jews, energetically working out the implication of their own very different belief and world view. Pauline Christianity, despite it's effort to anchor itself in Judaism by usurping the Jewish religio-historical scheme, is far from Judaism in tone. Its basic world attitude is that of Gnosticism, reinforced by powerful sado-masochistic elements derived from mystery religion evoking echoes of primitive sacrifice.**

# GNOSTICISM, PAUL, AND HIS ANTI-SEMITISM

**Let us not forget what we have already learned. The Torah was temporary and the by-product of a God that many Gnostics felt was an "evil" God who created an imperfect world with so much suffering and evil. Since for Paul he did not accept that initial thought he nevertheless accepted the complete inability of the Torah of the Jews' to be any type of effective remedy for the sin and evil in the world. The Torah was only for Paul a barometer of sin and the people (the Jews) who stauntly refused to give it up for his special "gnosis" and "unique salvation messages" that for Paul replaced this Torah was definitely a stumbling stone in Paul's agenda. The Jews were his biggest obstacle; especially the Jerusalem Church who never accepted him or his message regardless of Paul's first-hand accounts and defenses of his position written by him or his closest adherents.**

An important aspect of Paul's mythology is the strong potential for anti-Semitism which it shares with Gnosticism. If Paul was the creator of the Christian myth, he was also the creator of the anti-Semitism which has been inseparable from that myth, and which eventually produced the medieval diabolization of the Jews, evinced in the stories of the "blood libel" and the alleged desecration of the Host.

*1Thes 2:15-16 15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: 16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. (KJV)*

**Even if the most explicit outburst against the Jews in Paul's Epistles (1 Thessalonians 2:15-16) is regarded as a later interpolation, there is quite sufficient in his more moderate expressions about the Jews and in the general configuration of his myth to give rise to anti-Semitism. It is he who first assigns to the Jews the role of the "sacred executioner", the figure fated to bring about the death of the Saviour.**

*Rom 11:28 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: ...(KJV)*

**He says that the Jews "are treated as God's enemies for your sake (Romans 11:28), a phrase that sums up the role of the Jews in the Christian myth.**

The responsibility of Paul for Christian anti-Semitism has been overlooked because of the settled prejudice that Paul came from a highly Jewish background. But not let us forget what we learned about Paul's Gentile background and his conversion to Judaism in the earlier articles in this series where we examined the Ebionite literature concerning the true origins of Paul. **It seemed impossible that a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," a descendant of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Pharisee of standing could be the originator of anti-Semitic attitudes. In the ancient world, there was no such pressure of universal contempt and there were no self-hating Jews. It was non-Jews who did that...and Paul was a Jewish convert from Gentile backgrounds...so it stands to reason! Judaism was a faith and a religion; not a race!**

# PAUL...THE ORIGINATOR AND FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY

But the picture of Paul that has emerged from the present study makes it understandable that he was the originator of Christian anti- Semitism. He belonged to the fringes surrounding Judaism, of people who were impressed and attracted by Judaism, but had to fight against their upbringing and emotional make-up when they attempted a closer approach. Often such people would succeed in overcoming all difficulties and would become fully attached to Judaism either as "God-fearers" or as proselytes; such people, as the Talmud says, became the best Jews of all. But occasionally the influence of childhood culture was too strong; they might fall back into paganism or, alternatively, they might concoct weird religious fantasies, partly derived from Judaism and partly from Hellenism, in which the Jews tended to figure as the villains, rather than as the heroes. A certain ,feeling of failure or rejection lies behind these fantasies.

Paul was the greatest dreamer of all. He created the Christian myth by deifying Jesus, a Jewish Messiah figure whose real aims were on the plane of Jewish political Utopianism. Paul transformed Jesus' death into a cosmic sacrifice in which the powers of evil sought to overwhelm the power of good, but, against their will, only succeeded in bringing about a salvific event. This also transforms the Jews, as Paul's writings indicate, into the unwitting agents of salvation, whose malice in bringing about the death of Jesus is ironically turned to good because this death is the very thing needed for the salvation of sinful mankind. The combination of malice and blindness described here is the exact analogue of several of the myths from pagan mystery religions from which Paul borrows his ideas.

Paul took the cosmic drama of good and evil from Gnosticism, and so took over also the dramatization of the Jews as the representatives of cosmic evil. But, by combining the myth of Gnosticism with the myth of the mystery cults (which were not themselves anti-Semitic), Paul sharpened and intensified the anti-Semitism already present in Gnosticism. The Jews became not just the opponents of the figure descended from the world of light, but the performers of the cosmic sacrifice by which the heavenly visitant brings salvation. The Jews thus become identified as the, dark figure which in myths of the deaths of gods brings about the saving death - Set, Mot, Loki; and the stage is prepared for the long career of the Jews in the Christian imagination as the people of the Devil. The elements which Paul took over from Judaism to embellish his myth - the religio-historical element which set the death of Jesus in a panorama of world history - only intensified the resultant anti-Semitism, because there was now an aspect of usurpation in the Pauline myth, an incentive to blacken the Jewish record in order to justify the Christian take-over of the Abrahamic "promises." The career of the Jews in history began to be seen as a prefiguring of their central role, the murder of the divine sacrifice; they were separated from their prophets, now regarded as proto-Christs, hounded, like Jesus, by the Jews.

Paul's religious ideology did not end with him as you well know but it served as the background for the later writing of the Gospels which we today also know came from non-Jewish hands. The religious synthesis or myth foreshadowed by Paul was then brought into full imaginative life in the Gospels, which were written under the influence of Paul's ideas and for the use of the Pauline Christian Church. **A fully well-developed account of mythological dimensions is now elaborated on the basis of historical materials, which are adapted to provide a melodrama of good and evil. The powerful image of Judas Iscariot is created: a person fated and even designated by his victim, Jesus, to perform the evil deed, possessed by Satan and carrying out his evil role by compulsion, yet suffering the fate of the accursed - a perfect embodiment of the role of the sacred executioner, deputed to perform the deed of blood, yet execrated for performing it. While Judas performs the role on the personal level, the Jewish people, in the Gospel myth, perform it on the communal level: actuated by blindness and malice in alternation, calling for Jesus' crucifixion in the climactic Barabbas scene and accepting responsibility for the sacrifice by saying, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27: 25).**

**What in Paul's letters was only the outline of a myth has become definite and replete with narrative quality, an instrument for cultural indoctrination and the conveyor of indelible impressions to children who are told the tale.**

**The myth created by Paul was thus launched on its career in the world: a story that has brought mankind comfort in its despair, but has also produced plentiful evil.**

Out of his own despair, rejection by the Sadducee Priest and later coupled with his agony and rejection by the Pharisees whom he had prior persecuted to death, Paul created his myth and his new religion. He was not intent on being "an also ran." He would have "his gospel" and a name for himself at all costs. His rejection was to be a thing of the past. He reasoned that there was no rejection in giving men what they already had so he modeled his "revelation" in the form of 3 then existing world religions and out of this unique synthesis he would have something that all men everywhere could relate to in some degree. He would not to ask anyone to give up anything only accept another "in the image" of what they already had. Paul only needed a heavenly "revelation" to give his synthesis divine authority and he got one; a rather good one that provides for the first time syncretism of Judaism, Mystery religions, and Gnosticism. He might not win the Jews who refused to give up their Torah but the Gentiles would provide no such obstacles for him and his success was guaranteed.

**Answer for yourself: To a people who already were permeated with "mental ascent" to various cosmic-divine godmen what would another one hurt?**

**His belief that he received this "gnosis" or religious myth from the heavenly Jesus himself has obscured Paul's own role in creating it. The misunderstandings and false statements which he fostered about his own background have prevented readers of the New Testament from disentangling Paul's myth from the historical facts about Jesus, the so-called Jerusalem Church, and Paul's own adventures and clashes with his contemporaries. Later Gentiles related Paul's message to the world in print and can be found in our New Testaments. Sadly our failure to know Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism before embarking upon a study of the New Testament robs us of the ability to spot Paul's rather clever synthesis of three world religions of his time. Our failure to know this and make necessary distinctions ultimately robs of the true picture of Jesus that can be obtained from the New Testament if such information is possessed by the reader. But out of the religious influences that jostled in his mind, he created an imaginative synthesis that, for good or ill, became the basis of Western culture.**

**In closing let it be said that Paul was not a true follower of the historical Jesus but one who betrayed not only the man but his message. Today 2.5 billion Christians who believe themselves to be true followers of Jesus read the New Testament and read about a Jewish Frankenstein; a part here, a part there; here another part. In the final analysis the picture of the New Testament Jesus is horrifying when compared to the true historical Jesus which can be recovered today by unbiased and diligent study. The historical Jesus was never a tri-clops theologically like Paul. The only thing necessary on your part in order to study out and see these things for yourself is not only the desire to know the truth before you die but an undying love in your heart for the true Jesus and the God he served in order that your worship be in Spirit and in Truth...something in short supply today. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S DENIGRATION OF THE JEWS

In the Pauline epistles, besides attacks on the Torah, there were direct, personal, verbal assaults on Jews. **In Paul's very first epistle, 1 Thessalonians, which was written around 50 C.E., a scurrilous accusation against Jews of deicide is found. Many scholars claim that this is an interpolation by a later editor or redactor of the letter. This charge, however, was stated in all four Gospels, and figured prominently in Matthew and Acts. Scholars also claim that the Lukan indictment is the result of an alteration by an editor. Many, if not most, Christian believers have difficulty in accepting these scholarly claims and read the Christian Scriptures as coming in entirety from the hand of the person to whom the work is attributed.**

**A barrage against the Jews was unleashed in 1 Thes. 2:14- 16 as the speaker addressed his converts:**

***For you brothers, become imitators of G-d's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus. You suffered from your countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved.***

Either Paul or the later Christian editors of his letters endeavored to discredit the Jews as savage killers of men based on the fiction that they had killed the prophets. Although generations had passed since the prophets had lived, Jews were indicted. Thus the Jews were accused of killing people who had not been killed, at a time that they, the alleged killers, had not been alive. Parallel to the guilt imposed on Jews in the first century for the death of prophets they had not even known is the charge laid on Jews for 1900 years of deicide against a man they had never known.

Another unsubstantiated charge was that Paul had been driven out of Judea. **From all that he and others wrote, Paul** chose **to leave Jerusalem on his missionary journeys to spread his word and establish his religion.** Nor is there any foundation to the inference that the Nazarenes suffered from their fellow Jews. No evidence exists of Jews persecuting Christians in Judea**.**

In the most serious accusation, deicide, Paul or his interpolator carefully avoided any mention of Roman culpability. In fact, he made no reference to the Romans at all, even though everyone knew of their presence and power in Judea and the kind of capital punishments they meted out. This reticence concerning the Romans can be understood as prudence born of fear. While he cannot be faulted for that fear, neither can he be lauded for the resultant behavior. Regardless of how scared he was of the Romans, Paul or his ghost writer was not justified in blaming Jews for the Romans' crimes.

Aside from being dishonest, **this accusation of deicide is the most heinous and wicked in the epistles. It has had immeasurable repercussions and caused untold harm and human suffering. This false charge was repeated**

**down through the ages after Paul by evangelists and patristics, by popes and Christian leaders, and by rank-and-file devotees in pogroms, crusades, and concentration camps.**

**In Phil. 3 there is an hateful attack, the object of which were the "Judaizing Christians." Since they are not identified by name but by description as "those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh," most readers of, and believers in, the New Testament understand this last term to be a code word for Jews since they were the only people practicing circumcision. There were no Moslems yet. This is how verses 3:19-20 read:**

## *their god is their stomach and their glory is in their shame; their mind is on earthly things.*

**And by contrast, Paul wrote about himself and his associates in the next verse:**

## *But our citizenship is in heaven.*

**This portrayal, whether of Gentile Judaizers or Jews, has fixed a picture of Jews in the minds of Christians as carnal creatures, concerned only with the satisfaction of their material and bodily needs. From Chrysostom to Luther these same words were used to defame Jews. It was easy, for centuries afterward, to assault such beings physically and verbally because they were not in the same category of humanity as the spiritual Christians. Western literature is full of Jewish fictitious characters which fit Paul's description. From Shakespeare's Shylock to Dickens' Fagin, from the unsavory Jews drawn by Voltaire to Balzac's Jewish usurer, Gobseck, we see the stereotyped caricatures of Jews which had their genesis in Paul's depiction. To suggest that this was merely the rhetoric of the day neither excuses nor justifies it. Hitler's inflammatory speeches were also the rhetoric of the day. Moreover, neither Paul nor the evangelists nor the editors of the New Testament found a precedent for such rhetoric in the Hebrew Scriptures. No similar, spurious accusations were part of the Tanakh.**

**Another criticism leveled at Jews by way of an unflattering comparison with Christians is found in 1 Cor. 1:22-23 in which Paul wrote,**

## *"Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom but we preach Christ crucified..."*

**Not only is this a false charge, it is curious coming from the father of a religion based on miracles.**

**Answer for yourself: What is Jesus' resurrection if not a miraculous occurrence which Christians must believe as dogma?**

**Jesus' seemingly magical cures of lepers, cripples, and the blind and the even more remarkable revival of the dead Lazarus, were considered miracles which served as proof of his divinity or divine powers. His ability to walk on water, to turn water into wine, along with a host of other wondrous happenings are crucial to Christianity. All the "mysteries" in Christianity must be understood in terms of the miraculous. Judaism, by contrast, does not depend on miracles for its validity. Although many miraculous events are recorded in the Tanakh-the parting of the Red Sea (or Sea of Reeds), Joshua's halting of the sun and moon in their paths, Elijah's and Elisha's dividing of the waters and the latter increasing the oil supply of the widow, Daniel's safety in the lion's den, etc.--there was a tendency from early Talmudic times to rationalize and allegorize the miracles. Judaism has disparaged miracles as props of faith (Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Judaism and Christianity: The Difference, p. 36). In later centuries there arose certain Hassidic sects whose members revered "miracle workers." However, neither the miracles nor the workers have any authority in Jewish law--even among their admirers. Already in the Torah came the warning against heeding a prophet who performs miracles and urges people to follow other gods. "You shall not pay attention to his words" is the admonition in Dt. 13:4. It was not Jews who needed miracles or magic to bolster their faith in God and their Bible. The value of the latter was in**

**its ethical teachings. If Jews depended on signs and miracles, the laws would not have held such sway over them.**

**As Solomon Schechter stated, "In the whole of Rabbinic literature there is not one single instance on record that a Rabbi was ever asked by his colleagues to demonstrate the soundness of his doctrine, or the truth of a disputed Halachic case, by performing a miracle....Not a single miracle is reported for Hillel and Shammai both of whom exercised such an important influence on Judaism" (S. Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, pp. 6-7). Stories in the Midrash, Haggadah, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Philo have no religious authority in Judaism. Even if some midrashic ideas and works were extant in Paul's time, his knowledge of Hebrew and association with Jewish scholars were too limited for him to be acquainted with these concepts. This shows how unfamiliar Paul was with contemporary Judaism despite his self-description as a knowledgeable Pharisee.**

**Paul's complaint in Romans that Jews bragged about their relationship to God (2:17) and boasted about the Law (2:28, 3:27) was discussed earlier in a previous article in terms of the Chosen People concept. The apostle's description of Jews as bragging and boastful was his way of depicting them as arrogant. This was one more taunt and personal attack. If Jews were proud that God had conferred the Torah on them and that they had accepted it and lived up to its precepts, their pride was justifiable. It might be compared to the pride which Paul and his followers expressed about the gospel that they proclaimed. Paul took pride in disdaining the Law and asserting the impossibility of abiding by it or gaining forgiveness through it. Jews have demonstrated their appreciation of the divine gift by their pride in it, as well as by their efforts to fulfill the laws and cling to them in the face of criticism by Paul and his successors.**

**It is a bit surprising that Paul accused Jews of boastfulness when he was vulnerable to this charge by his own admission in 2 Cor. 11. There he told of all he had endured-- hunger, thirst, cold, danger, and being beaten, stoned, imprisoned, and shipwrecked. It seemed that his recital of his hardships was due to a wish to impress his respondents with his suffering and self-sacrifice. By relating this, Paul may have also expected to convey to his listeners the idea that through his agony he came closer to Jesus in the latter's final anguish. All of this is human and understandable and immodest. But Paul displayed an even greater tendency to bragging in his insistence that he was selected by God to spread the gospel. He made this claim when he thought his teachings were under attack. Here are his words:**

- **Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...(2 Cor. 1:1).**
- **Paul, an apostle--sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God, the Father who raised him from the dead (Gal. 1:15).**
- **But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man (GAL 1:15).**

**Answer for yourself: How is this claim of chosenness different in essence from that of the Jews?**

**Moses did not boast of his special role in receiving and transmitting the Torah as did Paul in his capacity as disseminator of the gospel.**

**Before leaving this section of the epistles, we should say a few words about the "antichrist." Some scholars insist that the antichrist was someone within the Church. Martin Luther, for example, considered the pope of his day to be the antichrist. Many Christians have labeled their adversaries who are coreligionists by this name. Nevertheless, the Jews, both in the past and present, have been the prime target of this epithet. This term is used in letters 1 and 2 John. 1 John 2:22 says:**

***Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is Christ. Such a man is the antichrist--he denies the Father and the Son.***

**In 2 John 7 the antichrist is described as the deceiver.**

**The Johannine letters did not start out primarily as anti-Jewish. They reflect a bitter intra-Christian dispute caused by a schism in the Johannine community. Invectives and name-calling were rife. Much of this history is unknown to lay Christians.**

**In later generations the Church used the term against Jews. Consequently, it did not require a great leap of imagination for readers of these short letters to connect the antichrist to Jews who do not recognize Jesus as the christ or the deity. As a result, in the Christian mind, lying and deception become the trademarks of Jews, the "deniers" and "unbelievers."**

**Jews, as portrayed in the epistles, had no redeeming qualities. Whether written by Paul, or disciples whose thoughts are extensions of his, the letters depict Jews as deicidal, murderous, brutal, carnal, superstitious, arrogant, and deceitful. A litany of worse traits would be hard to assemble. In short, Jews constituted a composite picture of the enemy. In Rom. 11:28, again a passage not in the original Romans until 180 A.D., Paul actually used the Greek word for "alienated" to describe the Jews which, significantly, has been rendered as "enemy" in the overwhelming majority of translations of the letter. For that is how Paul's characterization of Jews impressed his readers.**

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# THE INCONSISTENCY IN PAUL'S WRITINGS ESPECIALLY TOWARD THE JEWS: TOLERANCE TO BIGOTRY, FROM LOVE TO HATE

Paul's epistles reveal many anomalies and contradictions. There is a tension between tolerance and bigotry and between love and hate which is evident in his writings. Rom. 14 is a case in point. **Paul devoted several verses in that chapter (1-21) to an eloquent appeal for tolerance in his adherents. He urged them not to judge others if their customs were different in the foods they abstained from or the holidays they celebrated. Some of his most liberal and broad-minded statements are found in this passage, viz.,**

- Why do you look down on your brother? For we all stand before God's judgment seat (14:10).
- Let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way (14:13).

Yet Paul did not follow his own advice. **After preaching tolerance for others and advising his listeners not to judge others, he reversed himself in the very last line of the chapter by saying, "Everything which does not come from faith is sin."**

**Answer for yourself: Now, who is judging?**

The last line is clearly judgment of others. When push came to shove, Paul's non-judgmental attitude did not extend to brothers who were not of his brotherhood.

The same inconsistency is manifest between the apostle's avowals of love for humanity, on the one hand, and the expressions of animosity for a large segment of it, on the other. He spoke of love in the abstract for all mankind but did not apply it to an entire people. He called for accepting differences in others but could not tolerate any deviation from his beliefs. For those who disagreed with him, Paul had neither love nor tolerance.

**One of the most beautiful and oft-repeated passages in the New Testament is contained in Paul's epistle, 1 Cor. 13. Here are its (justifiably) most famous verses:**

***If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves. Love never fails (1-8) And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love (13).***

**What a tragedy for mankind, what a catastrophe for Jewry, that these magnificent thoughts did not pervade all of Paul's letters or, constitute a dominant part of them as they have come down to us. How different the history of the human race might have been if these ideas had prevailed as Paul's legacy to his religious descendants. Instead, Paul's angry attacks, unrestrained animosity, and uninhibited aggression against Jews, Judaism, and their sympathizers set an unfortunate pattern and precedent for his followers to emulate.**

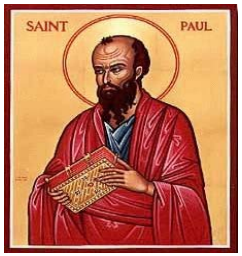
**"Pauline anti-Judaism does not arise as the left-hand of his christology but rather as a right-handed spear aimed straight at the heart of Judaism, viz., Torah. The common understanding of Paul's relation to Judaism *in most Christian circles* is the complete elimination of an Israel faithful to the Torah...According to the *most universal interpretation* of Paul wittingly, or unwittingly, his theology has become a major source of Christian anti-Judaism" (Lloyd Gaston, "Paul and the Torah," cited in Antisemitism and the Foundations of Christianity, edited by Alan Davies, pp. 49-50). Paul's lip service to brotherly love was translated by his spiritual followers into vicious assaults on Jews.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




### THE BOOK OF ACTS AND PAUL'S ACTIVITIES

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**The Book of Acts is thought to be my most Christians Luke's history of Christianity after Jesus' death. Hugh Schonfield pointed out that the book reflects the efforts of the Church "to convince the Romans of its harmlessness and its distinction from the Jews whose hostility is stressed" (H. J. Schonfield, The Jew of Tarsus, p. 60). Most scholars agree that the discourses in Acts were freely composed by Luke due to his desire to deal with the Roman authorities tactfully and to attribute the trials of Christians to Jews (Alme Puech, "History of Christian Greek Literature, Vol. I, pp. 382-398, quoted by Jules Isaac in Jesus and Israel, p. 363).**

**Luke repeated all the accusations against Jews which appeared in the Gospels such as killing prophets and crucifying Jesus. He added a new one: the stoning of Stephen, which appears to have been a riot that got out of hand and ended in a lynching. According to Acts, Stephen made a long speech before the Sanhedrin in which he accused its members of murdering Jesus for which he was dragged outside and stoned. We have already learned in a previous article that this is not how the Sanhedrin worked. If Stephen were found guilty of libel, he would have been subject to corporal punishment, but only after due deliberation and a vote. He would not have been executed. Stephen is considered the first Christian martyr. It is significant that no Christian before him who was put to death by the Romans earned that distinction. The title was reserved for a victim of a mob scene which he, himself, had provoked.**

**In Acts Paul is revered and idealized as the missionary par excellence. All conflicts in which Paul was involved with Jewish Christians, for example the split between the Jerusalem Petrines Peter, James, and John are excluded (S.G.F. Brandon, The Fall Of Jerusalem, p. 213). As Paul travelled through the empire, Luke emphasized in case after case the ill-will of the Jews and the benevolence of the Romans. The former Petrines organized gangs against him; created tumults wherever he went; and drove Paul and his clique out of town. The Romans, by contrast, were reasonable, helpful, and humane.**

**Paul's arrival in Jerusalem brought contention between him and virtually every segment of the population: the Nazarenes (Jewish Christians), the other Jews, and the Romans. While at the Temple one day, Paul was recognized by Jewish pilgrims from Asia Minor who alerted the people that Paul had taught everywhere "against our people and our law and this place" (Acts 21:28). Members of the Jerusalem Council had already confronted him with the rumors they had heard about his teachings against the Law, precepts with which they disagreed. In spite of his well-known sermons and letters, Paul (in the words of the Lukan playwright) had the effrontery to deny in court that he opposed the Law.**

**True to the evangelists' tradition of highly imaginative courtroom scenes, Acts' description of the Sanhedrin resembled slapstick comedy at its worst. For starters, Luke reported that Paul was struck on the mouth by order of the High Priest. That incident was followed, we are told, by a speech in which Paul created an uproar in what normally would be a decorous chamber of a courtroom. Paul slyly raised the subject of resurrection, somthing that a Gnostic never believed, which led to the eruption of a violent dispute between Pharisees and Sadducees, thus distracting the judges from the issue at hand. It remained for the Romans to save the day. Ever concerned for safety and justice, the Roman soldiers wisked Paul away to protective custody in their barracks. It is not clear why Paul was in danger when Pharisees and Sadducees got into a debate. Nor was it explained how Roman soldiers happened to be present at the Sanhedrin. Gentiles were not allowed within the precincts of the Temple where the Sanhedrin met. In fact, the charge against Paul was that he had brought a Gentile into the Temple area. But since this was Luke's story, he told it his way, oblivious of those details which made his narrative inconsonant.**

**If we are to credit the story of Paul's trial in Acts its description is similar in many ways to Jesus' hearing. It is apparent that it too was allegedly held before the High Priest's court. Paul's actions had so stirred up discord that they came to the attention of the High Priest. It was his responsibility to investigate any disturbance of the peace and nip it in the bud. Tranquility was vital to Roman control of a province.**

**Meanwhile, to continue the tale--back at the barracks, Paul learned of a plot to kill him. Again the Romans saved the day by rescuing him from the threat of a lynch mob. They transferred him to a military prison in Caesarea where he was held prisoner for two years. Finally, Paul decided to request trial before Caesar's court although the then Roman governor, Festus, advised him to return to Jerusalem to stand trial before the Sanhedrin. Paul believed that he would get a fairer trial with the Romans. The net result of all this was that Paul was held in prison without trial for two years at the Roman headquarters in Caesarea before being sent to Rome. There he was kept under house arrest for another two years before he was executed although Acts never says or implies that Paul was found guilty.**

**Luke did not express one word of criticism of Roman justice. In fact, although he wrote that Felix wanted a bribe and held Paul prisoner because it was not forthcoming, Luke, forgetting what he had just said, asserted that the Roman governor kept Paul imprisoned to please the Jews! (Acts 24:26-27). Luke could not resist the urge to take a potshot at Jews whenever the opportunity arose; and being resourceful, he always found occasions. They also provided him with the added advantage of whitewashing the Romans as the dupes of the Jews. Acts portrayed the latter as possessing a sole and all-consuming interest in trapping the current Christian leader. In the Gospels they had nothing more important or urgent than to conspire against Jesus; in Acts Paul was the object of their plots. Because of such false representations of historical truth, Luke is considered by some scholars such as Father John Pawlikowski and Prof. J. Townsend to be the most anti-Jewish of all the evangelists.**

**If the story of Paul's imprisonments as related by Luke had any historical validity, it would point up the futility of Paul's suffering and the foolishness of his decision to leave Jerusalem. For the irony of his long confinement in jail, his house arrest, and eventual execution is that he would have avoided it all under Jewish justice. King Agrippa of Judea had heard Paul's case and commented to Festus, Felix's successor, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar." Mantel concurs. The scholar on the Sanhedrin stated that there was nothing in the charges against Paul which called for trial before the Great Sanhedrin (Hugo Mantel, op. cit., p. 294).**

**Nevertheless, despite Paul's fate at the hands of the Romans, Luke only wrote about the apostle's earlier troubles with Jews. He accused them of stoning Paul ( Acts 14:9) although Paul lived to tell about it and it is unusual for a person to survive such an attack. Luke also claimed that Jews incited mobs against Paul (Acts 17:5) and tried to bring charges against him in court for undermining the Law. Herford's comments about these complaints goes to the heart of the problem. He wrote, "Is it a wonder that Jews opposed a man who preached as Paul did, against all that to them was sacred? Were they not right to defend it against insult and injury? What ground had they, or could they have, for admitting the superiority of a religion that was commended to them by such methods?" (R.T. Herford, Pharisees, p. 223).**

**Luke, along with his fellow evangelists and apostles, arrogated to themselves the right to defame Jews. But when they rose in self-defense against their assailants, they were accused of "dirty pool." According to the rules of the evangelists and apostles, the attacks could go only one way. This became a pattern over the centuries. In this model, Jews are supposed to be "a light unto the nations" (Isaiah 42:6) which, to many Christians, acquired the meaning that Jews were not supposed to do anything so pedestrian as to fight back. When Jews did, they ceased to be a beacon because they had abandoned their Biblical destiny. Of course, if Jews submitted to, or were overwhelmed by, persecution, their light was also extinguished. Heads Jews lost; tails their opponents won.**

**Paul's religious teachings had political significance because he created strife between Jews and their neighbors throughout the Roman Empire. The Roman government was not indifferent to the disruptive consequences of Paul's activities (Hugo Manel, op. cit., p. 300). It was, no doubt, on these grounds that Paul, who was taken to Rome, was executed. According to Christian tradition Paul was martyred there. Identification of the Romans as the power which put Paul to death does not require a stretch of the imagination. "Luke must have known about Paul's death, but he did not record it, because to have ended his book by narrating how Christianity's chief hero had been put to death as an enemy of the state would have alienated Roman readers and defeated his purpose of commending Christianity to the Roman world" (M. and J. L. Miller, op. cit., p. 533). In addition it would have brought the wrath of the Romans on his head. Thus the exact time and manner of Paul's death went unrecorded in the New Testament.**

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# PAUL AND HIS OPPOSITION BY THE NAZARENES AND JESUS' CHURCH...SHOULD THIS TROUBLE US?

**Paul's writings show a marked divergence from Pharisaic Judaism and their teachings. They also, not surprisingly, are different from the views of the Nazarenes or Jewish Christians. The people most closely associated with Yeshua in his life formed the nucleus of the Nazarene movement. The members of this group attended the synagogue and considered themselves Jews. They were Nazarene Jews, just as others were Pharisaic Jews or Essene Jews. These first followers of Yeshua must have been opposed to Paul's arguments against the Torah and Jewish ceremonies and practices. Leading members of the Nazarenes were Peter and James, Yeshua's apostle and brother, respectively. This very James headed the Jerusalem Church or Council.**

**In the Epistle of James the conflict between the Jewish Nazarene movement and Paul's Gentile Christianity came to the fore. James ridiculed the Pauline concept that faith can substitute for good deeds and actions. The Book of Acts and the Epistle to the Galatians have several references to the growing conflict between Paul and James. Paul was summoned to Jerusalem again a second time after the Acts 15 council as we see in Acts 21 to explain to the Jerusalem Council his reasons for abolishing the requirements of circumcision and dietary restrictions for Jews. Up to that time it had been the decision and understanding of James and the Jerusalem Council that circumcision would no longer be imposed upon the non-Jews for their acceptance into the Israel of God and fellowship with Jews. But we find Paul going beyond this and abolishing the totality of the Law for both his Gentile followers as well as Jews.**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)***

**Galatians 3 also bears witness to the differences Paul had with Peter about dietary observance. Following this confrontation, there is no evidence that the two men ever again resumed contact or friendly relations.**

## THE EBIONITES AND THEIR TESTIMONY ABOUT PAUL

**There are other documents which testify to Paul's alienation from the Nazarene sect. The Ebionites left literature which is contained in what is called, the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. These Pseudo-Clementine writings are some of the few writings we have today that preserve the actual message and gospel of Jesus as**

**taught by his earliest disciples and apostles and they were preserved because they were falsely attributed to Pope Clement. Actually, the core of these writings is Jewish Christian or Ebionite stemming from second century Syria.**

**Inasmuch as the Ebionites were a direct link to the Jerusalem Church, and, therefore, to Yeshua, their records would seem to be of great historical value. The earliest writings of this sect were about two centuries prior to those of most of the Church Fathers and therefore, closer in time to Paul and Yeshua. The Church Father, Irenaeus, in his book Against Heresies attacked the Nazarenes as heretics under the name of Ebionites (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, I. XXVI 1-2). The word Ebionites in Hebrew is *evyonim* which means poor people. It is another name by which the Nazarenes or Jewish Christians were called. This means that most of the Gentile Church Fathers attacked Jesus and his church!!!! [THINK]!**

**The Ebionite manuscripts cast light on Paul's life and provide much insight into his motivations, actions, and doctrines. The Ebionites rejected Paul as an apostate from the Law who had perverted Yeshua's teachings by claiming that Yeshua had abrogated the Torah and that the Law had ceased and passed away and only one need "faith only."**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this account by the first Jewish Christians who were followers of Yeshua sure is different from the picture of Paul given to us in the Greek Scriptures which were provided to us by Roman Gentiles in Rome?**

**Furthermore, the Ebionites asserted, Paul had violated Nazarene beliefs by transforming Yeshua into a deity. In the Ebionite documents Peter accused Paul of spreading lies about him by saying he opposed the Torah Peter also claimed that Paul knew nothing about Yeshua's teachings. The contention between Paul and James and Peter, alluded to in the canonical books of the New Testament (Acts, Epistles to the Galatians and of James and Jude), is affirmed in the Ebionite documents.**

**In an Arabic document, discovered by Shlomo Pines, an Israeli scholar, the Ebionite allegiance to the Torah is reiterated as is their belief in Yeshua as a human prophet. It also expressed "strong opposition to Paul as the falsifier of Yeshua's teachings" (H. Maccoby, The Mythmaker, p. 181). This Arabic document is from the tenth century. Pines was able to demonstrate that a section in it had been incorporated from a Jewish Christian source stemming from about the fifth century.**

**This accords well with views of contemporary scholars. The Book of Acts tried to patch over the differences between Peter and Paul and to show Peter as moving towards Paul's anti-Torah views. In reality this is not the case. We have today archeological evidence to the contrary! There really is no convincing proof that Peter, who was the apostle to the Jews, ever departed from the Nazarene position which held that Yeshua was a *human* Messiah and remained loyal to his Jewish faith.**

**The fourth century Church Father, Epiphanius, preserved the Ebionites' attack on Paul. Epiphanius quoted them as saying Paul was of Greek parentage, that he came to Jerusalem and fell in love with the daughter of the High Priest For this reason he converted to Judaism. When he was rejected, he turned against circumcision, the Sabbath, and the Law (Epiphanius, Panarion, XXX as cited in H. Schonfield, Those Incredible Christians, p. 155).**

**This story repeated by Epiphanius two centuries after it was written by the Nazarenes (or Ebionites), explains many characteristics of Paul: his limited knowledge of the Torah, his hostile statements about Jews and Judaism, and his affinity to, familiarity with, and greater comfort in working among, Gentiles. Paul's theology showed the influence of Hellenistic concepts and at the same time, a**

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## rejection of fundamental Jewish teaching.

**In his religious precepts Paul was no closer to the Nazarenes than he was to the Pharisees even though he recognized that his mission originally emanated from the former and he claimed in his letters that his roots were imbedded in the latter.**

**Answer for yourself: Now can you understand why we at Bet Emet ministries endeavors so diligently to uncover the lies given to us under the disguise of Yeshua and Gentile Christianity?**

**The bottom line is this…if you really want to follow Yeshua then much of Paul needs to be rethought in light of what Yeshua really believed and taught, because much of what passes for "the Gospel" from Paul is his attempt to get personal satisfaction against the Jews which rejected him. Much of Paul's gospel is lies that can be verified beyond any doubt today by serious study. We are so fortunate today to be aided by archeology and the ability to obtain such information that was beyond the means of such study as little as two centuries ago. Today we are richly blessed by God that we can know the truth about Paul. Shalom**

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# PAUL'S CONVERSION AS DEPICTED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT....IS IT TRUSTWORTHY OR SHOULD WE BE SUSPICIOUS?

**Imagine yourself as a juror at a criminal trial. The defense has called three witnesses to back up the defendant's story. In their testimony, all three witnesses claim the same thing; namely, that they *HEARD* the defendant talking with another person but that they *DID NOT SEE* the other person. Then suppose that a couple of days later these same three witnesses are cross-examined. In their testimony, they claim just the opposite: that they *SAW* the defendant talking with another person but that they *DID NOT HEAR* the conversation. At one point, they claim to have heard but not seen the other person, while later they claim to have seen but not heard the other person. Most jurors would find that this contradictory testimony throws a great deal of suspicion on the veracity of these witnesses and what other they might have to say. This would most likely cause the jurors to disregard the witnesses' support of the defendant.**

**Answer for yourself: But what are we to do when we find such contradiction in the New Testament surrounding the Apostle Paul and should we be very careful in accepting other things he has to say? You better be!**

## NEW TESTAMENTS ACCOUNTS OF THE CONVERSION OF PAUL AND THE DISCREPANCIES

**With this in mind, let us examine an account recorded for us in the New Testament and take a look at the biblical account of the conversion of Saul.**

***As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:3-6)***

**And later in Paul's own words.**

***As I was traveling and coming near Damascus, about midday a bright light from the sky flashed suddenly around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" (Acts 22:6-7)***

**These two descriptions, one in the third person and one in the first person, are virtually identical. No problem yet. At this point, however witnesses are brought in to verify the story. Remembering the description of the witnesses in the imagined criminal trial, take a look at the testimony of witnesses to the alleged conversion of Saul.**

**First in Acts 9:**

***The men who were traveling with Saul had stopped, not saying a word; they HEARD the voice but COULD NOT SEE ANYONE. (Acts 9:7)***

**Now I challenge you to compare this with the account in Acts 22 and see if it is the same:**

***The men with me SAW the light, but did not hear the voice of the one speaking to me. (Acts 22:9)***

**Answer for yourself: Do these accounts contradict each other? Sure do.**

**If you apply the same evidentiary standards to this biblical report as most people would in a trial situation, you would find that the testimony is, at the very least, called into question by the disparity of these two accounts.**

**Thus, the testimony of the witnesses is called into question to say the least!**

# NOW LETS QUOTE PAUL AND SEE IF HE CONTRADICTS HIMSELF:

**Answer for yourself: But what about the testimony of Paul himself?**

**In Acts 22 and Acts 26, the author (Luke) indicates that he is actually *quoting* Paul rather than merely describing the conversion as he did in Acts 9.**

***In Acts 26,* Paul says that Yeshua told him of his plans for him at the time of the vision on the road to Damascus:**

**“It was on the road at midday, Your Majesty, that I saw a light much brighter than the sun, coming from the sky and shining around me and the men traveling with me. All of us fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in Hebrew, "Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me? You are hurting yourself by hitting back, like an ox kicking against its owner's stick." "Who are you, Lord?" I asked. And the Lord answered, "I am Yeshua, whom you persecute. But get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant. You are to tell others what you have seen of me today and what I will show you in the future. I will rescue you from the people of Israel and from the *Gentiles to whom I will send you.* You are to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to the light and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God's chosen people." (Acts 26:13-18)**

**It is plain that in this account, Paul claims and tells us in his own words what he was told what to do by Jesus and also tells us that he was at that time informed of his role in taking Christianity to the Gentiles at the very time of his vision on the road to Damascus.**

**Compare both of these items with the account that he is reported to have given in Acts 22. First, concerning his basic instructions:**

**As I was traveling and coming near Damascus, about midday a bright light from the sky flashed suddenly around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" I asked. "I am Yeshua of Nazareth, whom you persecute," he said to me. The men with me saw the light, but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. I asked, "What shall I do, Lord?" and the Lord said to me,"Getup and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything that God has determined for you to do. I was blind because of the bright light, and so my companions took me by the hand and led me into Damascus.**

**In that city was a man named Ananias, a religious man who obeyed our Law and was highly respected by all the Jews living there. He came to me, stood by me and said, "Brother Saul, see again!" At that very moment I saw again and looked at him. He said, "The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see his righteous Servant, and to hear him speaking with his own voice. For you will be a witness for him to tell everyone what you have seen and heard." (Acts 22:6-15)**

**Answer for yourself: What is missing…did you notice?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the commission and instructions from Yeshua to go to the Gentiles is lacking in Acts 22?**

**Answer for yourself: Who told Paul of the details of his commission; Ananias or Yeshua?**

***Here in Acts 22, Paul claims that his instructions were given to him by Ananias sometime after entering the city of Damascus, not directly by Yeshua on the road to Damascus as he claimed in Acts 26.***

**The information about Paul going to the Gentiles comes even later in this version:**

**I went back to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the Temple, I had a vision, In which I saw the Lord, as he said to me, "Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because the people here will not accept your witness about me." "Lord,' I answered, "they know very well that I went to the synagogues and arrested and beat those who believe in you. And when your witness Stephen was put to death, I myself was there, approving of his murder and taking care of the cloaks of his murderers." "Go," the Lord said to me,"FOR I WILL SEND YOU FAR AWAY TO THE GENTILES. - (Acts 22:17-21)**

## JUST SO WE UNDERSTAND

***At one point (Acts 26), Paul claims that he is told of his mission to the Gentiles at the time of his vision. Yet, at another time (Acts 22), he states that after the vision he went to Damascus and then returned to Jerusalem, and only then did he receive these instructions.***

**Answer for yourself: What am I to believe Paul? Can we not get the story correct?**

**Answer for yourself: Where is the Holy Spirit at work in this contradiction?**

**Answer for yourself: Are there other places in the New Testament where such contradiction and the absence of the direction of the Holy Spirit can be found? Sadly yes, in fact they abound!**

**Many will take issue with me of being too "picky" but let me remind you that millions of Christian believers treat the New Testament document as if it is inspired, infallible, and inerrant. It is not. Only by showing you the many problems contained within the New Testament which goes unrecognized by careless reading will you be able to see the deception at work by the Gentile redactors which literally changed a Jewish faith into a Gentile replacement faith as it exists today and distorted and completely changed a Jewish faith which once went into all the world in to a pagan compromise as it exists today. It is time to repent and return to the faith once given to the saints. It is time to repent and return to the only Bible Yeshua every used: the Hebrew Old Testament.**

**Dear reader, there is no way to justify what I have just shown you. This is a direct contradiction of the previous information.**

**Answer for yourself: Are we to believe the Holy Spirit can't get his story straight?**

# LOOKING EVEN DEEPER

**To add to the disparity of these conflicting statements, Paul's letter to the Galatians shows that It served Paul's purposes at that time to claim that after his vision, he did not return directly to Jerusalem from Damascus (as he claimed in Acts 22), but that instead he waited for three full years.**

## *Again this is a direct contradiction from the mouth of Paul himself to what has been said before by Paul.*

**It is things like this that made be begin to study the New Testament line upon line and precept upon precept because if the document is from God then such errors would not be prevalent. I wish I could say that this simple example is the extent of the mistakes within the New Testament, but much more serious errors abundantly abound in the New Testament concerning precious doctrines which have been corrupted when viewed in their original context within the Jewish Old Testament. Let us continue.**

**But God in his grace chose me even before I was born, and called me to serve him. And when he decided to reveal his Son to me, so that I might preach the Good News about him to the Gentiles, I DID NOT GO TO JERUSALEM to see those who were apostles before me. Instead, I went at once to Arabia, and then I returned to Damascus. IT WAS THREE YEARS LATER THAT I WENT TO JERUSALEM to obtain Information from Peter, and I stayed with him for two weeks. (Galatians 1:1-18).**

**Here, Paul attempts to stress that his instructions came from God and not from any of the other apostles (Ananias). For this purpose, it is convenient for him to contradict the claims that he previously made in Acts 22 and to separate himself from Jerusalem. Paul is developing his independent authority apart from the Jerusalem church. You will understand this ploy by Paul as you read more about his split with the Jerusalem church.**

**Answer for yourself: Which of these conflicting accounts are we to believe, and where is infallibility and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in these accounts?**

**Answer for yourself: If we cannot trust Paul about his conversion account, how can we trust what he teaches that stems from such a jumbled account, especially in light of the fact that much of what he teaches contradicts Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua himself?**

**Answer for yourself: Never seen such contradictions before?**

**Neither had I until I studied with those who knew more than myself and purchased books which showed such things to me. God did not drop this knowledge into my mind while I slept or went to church. It came only by intense study. The good news is that such knowledge is free.**

**Obviously, only one of these claims can be true (which, of course, means that one of them is false). It is interesting that at this point in his letter to the Galatians, Paul swears in the name of the Lord that what he has just said is true:**

## *What I write Is true. God knows that I am not lying! (Galatians 1:20)*

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul have to defend himself to others that what he is saying is not a lie?**

**Now you know. Paul talks out of the side of his mouth just like a politician. If you want I can show you have Paul contradicts himself in Romans repeatedly (he also contradicts Yeshua and Moses often). Casual Bible**

**reading and attending Sunday sermons won't give you the understanding you need to see such things. Study is the highest form of worship. Let us worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. Such study reveals the weaknesses within the New Testament and reveals that a true Christian will keep and observe Biblical Judaism and not the paganized manifestation of it as we have today called "Contemporary Christianity".**

***Now please don't get mad at me for showing you this, but let there be not doubt that I just showed you Paul was lying! His hearers knew it for themselves as well…that is why Paul had to defend himself and promise them he was not lying...he has to defend his "apostleship" all through the NT..have you not noticed this?***

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that Paul had to guarantee he is not lying since the motive for such an action on his part is most likely the skepticism of his audience to the veracity of what he is saying?**

**Thus, in both the accounts of the witnesses and those of Paul himself, there are some very basic contradictions in the descriptions of Paul's supposed conversion. While this does not prove that Paul's claim is false, it does provide one more link in the chain of reasoning presented through the articles of this ministry as we try to show you that the religion of Yeshua has been replaced by the new religion of Paul's imagination. Law has been replaced with grace, Passover with Easter, Passover with Communion, Sabbath with Sunday, etc. It is only by showing the reader the inaccuracies in the writings of Paul can we persuade today's brain-washed church that his writings are anything but infallible and inerrant, and were never intended to replace the Torah as our Bible, the Bible Yeshua used. At the very least, it provides enough information to allow for the possibility that Paul's claimed conversion may not have been genuine and this should make you wary of what he teaches and what is taught in his name, especially when it goes against the accepted and established religious belief system of Yeshua and Biblical Judaism. Any contradiction of Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua/Yeshua is not of God. Sorry Paul! Shalom.**

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# HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE WE ARE NOT MISLED WHEN READING THE PAULINE EPISTLES?

**Having grown up in Church all of my life, and having a fairly heavy exposure to Mainstream Christianity, and having familiarity with the Bible, possibly you like I noticed notice that Mainstream Christianity often de-emphasizes the Old Testament and puts a disproportionate amount of emphasis on Paul's epistles. I would hesitate to say that any part of the Scriptures can be overemphasized. However, if we give uncalled-for weight and emphasis to certain parts of the Bible, and neglect what the rest of the Scriptures teaches about an issue, we will probably develop an unbalanced view of that particular issue.**

**By volume, Paul's epistles make up approximately 5% of the Bible. Paul's writings are considered holy Scripture by Mainstream Christianity, but neither Paul nor the Holy Spirit expected us to give more weight and authority to these epistles than we do to the Old Testament or to the rest of the New Testament.**

**By putting a disproportionate amount of emphasis on these letters (only 5 % of the whole Bible) that Paul sent to various churches, we fail to follow the example of Paul, who told the Ephesians, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Ac.20:27). By neglecting certain parts of the Bible (95%), we ignore Paul's declaration that "all Scripture is inspired and is useful" (2 Tim.3:16).**

**Dear believer when Paul uttered this often quoted saying that "all Scripture is inspired and is useful for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction" the bulk of his writings had not even been written yet, and without a doubt, he was referring to the Bible used by Yeshua..the Old Testament which is tragically so overlooked in the churches that bear his name today. In fact the vast majority of churches that bear his name teach just the opposite of what Yeshua taught in that they teach the Law (Torah=instruction) has passed away.**

**Christianity's strong emphasis on Paul's writings, and lack of emphasis on so much of the rest of the Bible, is puzzling, no only to me but to the many who study the Scriptures in detail. It is especially puzzling when we consider Peter's warning about Paul's writings:**

***''His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (2 Pet.3:16).***

**Answer for yourself: Now don't you think it ironic and puzzling that Christianity today primarily focuses on that 5% of the Bible that even the Apostles who lived with Yeshua and headed up his Church found unsettling, difficult to understand, and easily misunderstood?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that we with all our good intentions also have been misled by what we hear today from those who themselves have misunderstood the often contradictory passages in our Bibles written by**

**Paul? Let me give you one for instance:**

**If it was easy for Paul's contemporaries to understand his epistles, we can be sure that it will be even easier for us to do so, with our limited knowledge of Biblical Judaism, a Jewish Messiah, and the situations and problems Paul was addressing when he wrote to these various churches. Yet some Christians, perhaps unknowingly, are more intent on following the easy-to-misunderstand teachings contained in Paul's letters than they are on following the plain teachings of Yeshua contained in the Gospels.**

# HOW DID 5% OF THE BIBLE - THE PAULINE WRITINGS- BECOME SO IMPORTANT TO THE EXCLUSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT?

**Answer for yourself: How did this shift of focus come about?**

**Answer for yourself: What caused the Church to begin paying so much attention to Paul and so little attention to the Law and the Prophets and other parts of the Bible which Yeshua used?**

**To discover the answer to this question, we must go all the way back to the Second Century. After all the original Apostles had died, other people took on the responsibility of continuing the Church's work. The original Apostles were all Jews, who had been exposed to the teachings of the Law and the Prophets since their childhood. The leaders who replaced the Law and the Prophets with the Pauline epistles were mostly Gentiles from pagan backgrounds, who had comparatively little understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures. We can read about these people in various documents from the Second Century.**

**One Church historian has this to say about these documents:**

***"Many stories come in versions so distorted that it is hard to decide whether the principal characters were worthy successors to the apostles, or the devil's own agents. Perhaps their contemporaries were as uncertain as we are." (Smith, M. A. From Christ to Constantine, London: Inter-varsity Press, 1971, p.14).***

# MARCION

**There is one character, however, which was undoubtedly one of the greatest adversaries to maintaining the faith once given to the saints: the heretic Marcion, who lived in the second half of the Second Century. Marcion put together the First New Testament in the middle of the second century. Marcion taught that the entire Old Testament should be rejected because it belonged to an evil, inferior God, and not to the God revealed by Yeshua of Nazareth.**

**Marcion was very anti-Jewish; therefore he also rejected any New Testament writings which appeared to speak favorably of "Jewish practices" (i.e., keeping the laws and commandments of the Old Testament). As one writer notes,**

***"Marcion started the trend which has had many followers right up to the present -- if it doesn't suit the theory. excise it as spurious or an interpolation." (Smith, M. A. From Christ to Constantine, London: Inter-***

*varsity Press, 1971, p.53).*

By the time Marcion finished editing the Scriptures, his "Bible" consisted of nothing more than Luke's Gospel (minus the "Jewish" elements..including the infancy narratives) and ten of Paul's epistles (many of which were added to by the Monks until the completion of the Canon). It is not my intention to get into this at this point, but the reason Marcion did not include the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke is because they had not been written yet! Again this is a record of historical fact. Paul, Marcion taught, was the only apostle who could be trusted and that the Jerusalem Church and its leaders should not be trusted. He got it backwards!.

**Marcion's anti-Jewish, pro-Paul churches spread throughout the Roman Empire and soon became a major threat to the Messianic faith. According to historians, Marcion's heresy continued to spread until it finally died out sometime around the Fifth Century. But we are continually exposed to the residual influence of Marcionism in Christianity today.**

**We who claim to believe the Bible must ask ourselves an important question:**

**Answer for yourself: Did Marcion's anti-Jewish, anti-Old Testament, pro-Paul heresy really die out?**

**Answer for yourself: Or did the Church simply succumb to it and accommodate it and incorporate it, in a subdued form, into Mainstream Christianity?**

**Answer for yourself: Of course our Bible, unlike Marcion's, includes the Law and the Prophets, but how much do we heed their instruction?**

***When we examine the average Christian's attitude to the Law and the Prophets, it is obvious that the influence of Marcion is very much alive in the Christian church today.***

**Although the Church pays lip service to the inspiration and authority of all the Scriptures, the Church's de-emphasis of the Law, the Prophets, and anything "Jewish," and its heavy emphasis on Paul, reveals that the Church today is basically Marcionite in practice.**

**For those who doubt this assertion, let us examine some things that Marcion taught, and we will see that the influence of Marcion still has a very strong influence on the Church today.**

## MARCION'S LEGACY IS WITH US TODAY

**Marcion's most influential writing was a work entitled Antithesis, described as "a highly competent work" which consisted of "contrasted statements arranged to prove the incompatibility of the law and the gospel." (Tertullian, Against Marcion, trans. and ed. Ernest Evans, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972, p.xv).**

**Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), there are no known copies of Antithesis in existence. What we know about Marcion's teachings comes mainly from the writings of those who opposed his heresy. The one to write the most about Marcion was Tertullian, a church leader who wrote a lengthy work called Against Marcion. Tertullian describes Antithesis as "a work strained into making such a division between the Law and the Gospel as thereby to make two separate Gods, opposite to each other, one belonging to one instrument (or, as it is more usual to say, testament), one to the other, and thus lend its patronage to faith in another gospel, that according to Antithesis." (Tertullian, IV.1)**

**No real Christian today would admit to believing in two Gods, of course. Yet many believers make such a division between Old Testament Law and New Testament grace, that they view the Law as something opposed to grace. The Law is seen as something obsolete and of little use to a Christian. Such a warped view of God's Law will carry over into our view of God Himself. If God's Old Testament Law is opposed to God's New Testament grace, we end up with either a schizophrenic God, or Marcion's two Gods.**

**''Marcion sets up unequal Gods," Tertullian writes, ''the one a judge, fierce and warlike, the other mild and peaceable, solely kind and supremely good." (Tertullian, IV.1.6)**

**Answer for yourself: Is this not exactly what many Christians do?**

***They shun the "Old Testament God" because He is too stern and fierce. They focus instead upon the ''New Testament God," who, in their minds, does not expect obedience to His laws.***

**Listen to Tertullian's description of Marcion's God, and see if it is not a description of the God presented by the Christian Church today: Marcion's God "displays neither hostility nor wrath." He "neither condemns nor disdains" and "does not punish." "A better God has been discovered," Tertullian sarcastically writes, "one who is neither offended nor angry nor inflicts punishment...he is merely kind. Of course he forbids you to sin -- but only in writing. It lies with you whether you consent to accord him obedience. (Tertullian,IV.1.26f).**

**"To what purpose does he lay down commands?" Tertullian asks. "This God is exceptionally dull-witted if he is not offended by the doing of that which he dislikes to see being done." (Tertullian, IV.1.26f).**

**Answer for yourself: We might ask ourselves the same question about the God we worship: To what purpose does He lay down commands? We are certainly not justified by keeping the Law without faith. We are justified by faith first....but this is a faith that "obeys" and does not "disobey."**

**Answer for yourself: But after we are justified, what are we to do with God's commandments?**

**Answer for yourself: Are we to put them into practice, or are we to disobey them?**

## THANKS FOR NOTHING SCOFIELD

**One thing that has helped the influence of Marcion to thrive so well in the Twentieth Century Church is the popularity of the Scofield Reference Bible. Even Christians who have never seen a Scofield Bible have probably been affected by it indirectly, through preachers and teachers who have been influenced by it. The Scofield Bible contains many excellent study notes and aids to understanding the Scriptures. Several of Scofield's notes, however, strongly suggest a Marcionite view of Law and Grace. A reader of Scofield's notes is left with the impression that Law and Grace are mutually exclusive. Scofield's anti-law bias has fed and nurtured and sustained the tares of nomophobia (fear of the law) that Marcion sowed in the Church nineteen centuries ago. As the end of the age approaches, God is sending forth His messengers to uproot these tares, so His wheat can mature and bring forth the fruit of obedience to God's laws.**

**A spirit of lawlessness has been hanging over the Church for most of its history. Some Christians have been influenced by it more than others, of course. Paul saw it beginning in his lifetime. Second Thessalonians speaks about "the secret power of lawlessness'' which was ''already at work" when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. Paul told the Thessalonians that before the Messiah returned, there would be a "falling away" (apostasy, 'departure from truth'.). This departure from the truth would then open the door for something**

**called "the man of lawlessness" to come forth. This "coming of the lawless one" would be accompanied by "all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders" which would "deceive those who are perishing."**

**Answer for yourself: Can you tell me that this is not a picture of a grace-filled and law-forsaking Christianity for the most part today?**

**"They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved," Paul writes. "For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie." Gentile Christianity has fallen into the trap. In preparation for the Return of the Messiah, God is also sending powerful revelation to graciously expose the ancient lie, so that those who love the truth can depart from error and be freed from the bewitching influence of the spirit of lawlessness.**

**In 1989, Ted Turner of CNN declared the Ten Commandments obsolete, and offered his own "Ten Voluntary Initiatives" as an alternative to God's outdated laws. No one should take Turner seriously, of course, but he did make one comment that deserves our attention. "Nobody around likes to be commanded," he said. "Commandments are out." (Turner's Commandments," Peoria Journal Star, 27 Oct., 1989, section D, p.22).**

**Answer for yourself: Christians may scoff at Turner's idea of replacing God's laws with human ideas, yet is this not the very thing the Church has done with some of God's commandments?**

**We have replaced the 24-hour, seventh-day Sabbath with an hour or two of Sunday morning worship; we have replaced the Biblical holy days with holidays of pagan origin; we have replaced God's dietary guidelines with our own ideas about what we should eat, and we have replaced giving the tithe to places ONLY where God has placed his name to the general fund of churches who use the LORD's moneys in which any way they desire. For your information the tithe in the Bible is to go to ONLY three categories or receptacles: 1) the widows, orphans, sick, lame blind, etc., 2) you are to keep part of your tithe to celebrate the LORD's Festivals and help the poor to observe them with you, and 3) to the Levite or the "teacher" who teaches the truth of God's Word and not the by-laws of your particular denomination.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you not realize that if your church does not distribute the LORD's tithe accurately then you are a party to "robbing God" and you have place yourself and your family "under a curse?"**

**Answer for yourself: Having said that you can better understand the following question: "after a person has been forgiven and justified by faith, where should he look for moral instruction?"**

**Answer for yourself: Should he look to God's commandments to tell him how to live the Christian life, or should he ignore God's commandments and live according to man's suggestions?**

**Even Scofield, in spite of all his anti-law bias and nomophobia, concedes that the Old Testament commandments "are used in the distinctively Christian Scriptures as an instruction in righteousness." (The Scofield Reference Bible, ed. C. I. Scofield, New York: Oxford University Press, 1917, p.l245).**

**In Against Marcion, Tertullian accuses Marcion and his followers of "forbidding what [God] commands and commanding what he forbids." (Tertullian, IV.1). The influence of Marcion continues to do this in the Church today. Mainstream Christianity has criticized believers for keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, for celebrating the Biblical holy days, for practicing the dietary laws, for placing their tithe in other places than their local church, and for refusing to shave their beards...all things that God has commanded. And, like Marcion, Mainstream Christianity often commands what God forbids: "Forget the Sabbath. Ignore the holy days and dietary laws, bring you tithe to the storehouse for the church is "the storehouse" (which it is not!). And shave that beard, so you'll look**

like a Christian!" (Many Bible colleges and seminaries command their students to shave the beard, in spite of God's command in Lev.19:27.)

Marcion, like many church leaders today, misused the words of Yeshua and the words of Paul to support this nomophobic, anti-Jewish, pro-Paul gospel. **Tertullian rightly points out that Yeshua's verbal teachings of the Law were not aimed at the Law itself but man's perversion and misuse of God's Law. "He is not criticizing the burdens of the law," Tertullian writes. The burdens Yeshua criticized were, according to Tertullian, "those which they piled on of their own, teaching for precepts the doctrines of men." (Ibid., IV.27).**

**Tertullian shows the importance Yeshua attached to keeping the commandments when he writes about the rich young ruler who approached Yeshua: "So when he is asked by that certain man, 'Good Teacher, what shall I do to obtain possession of eternal life?', he inquired whether he knew -which means, was keeping -- the Creator's commandments... Come now, Marcion, and all you companions in the misery and sharers in the offensiveness of that heretic, what will you be bold enough to say? Did Yeshua here rescind those former commands...?**

***Tertullian opposes Marcion's misuse of Paul's writings by pointing out the "Jewishness" of Paul's faith, and then asking, "What had (Paul) still to do with Jewish custom, if he was the destroyer of Judaism?" (Ibid., V.5).***

**He also refers to Romans 7:7 to combat Marcion's hatred of the Law: "What shall we say then? That the law is sin? God forbid." Shame on you, Marcion. God forbid: the apostle expresses abhorrence of complaint against the law...Yet he adds even more: "The law is holy, and its commandment is just, and good." (Ibid., V.14).** As Tertullian points out later, "you cannot make a promoter of the law into an opponent of it." (Ibid., V.17).

***Unfortunately, the Church ignored Paul's positive statements about the Law and Yeshua' warning about the necessity of continuing to practice and teach the Old Testament commandments. (See Matt.5:17-19.)***

**The Epistle of Barnabas, an influential letter written in the Second Century, indicates the general direction the Church was heading in its attitude to the Old Testament. "The main theme of Barnabas, writes one church historian, "is a spiritualization of the Mosaic law. The writer holds that the were wrong to take the Old Testament literally." (Smith, M. A. From Christ to Constantine, Inter-varsity Press, 1971, p.39).**

Everything in the Old Testament was allegorized to give it a Christian meaning. **Even the commandments were taken figuratively, because, according to Barnabas, "the law of Moses had never been meant to be taken literally." (Eerdman's Handbook to the history of Christianity, ed. Tim Dowley, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977, p.102). Even the dietary restrictions were said to represent not actual food, but various kinds of sinful habits.**

Justin Martyr's Dialogue With Trypho also shows early Christianity's negative attitude toward the Law. **Trypho the Jew expresses bewilderment when he tells Justin:**

***"[You Christians] spurn the commands...and then try to convince us [Torah-observant Jews] that you know God, when you fail to do those things that every God-fearing person would do. If, therefore, you can give a satisfactory reply to these charges and can show us on what you place your hopes, even***

***though you refuse to obey the Law, we will listen to you most willingly, and then we can go on and same manner our other differences.''*** **(Justin Martyr, Dialogue With Trypho, ch.10. Ibid., ch.ll, 14. 20, Ibid., ch.47).**

**Justin replies by saying that the Law "abrogated," "voided,'" and tells Trypho, "You understand all in a carnal way.'' (Ibid., ch. 11, 14).**

# BUT NOT ALL FELL PRAY TO THE PAULINE DECEPTION

**Not all followers of the Messiah were influenced by the nomophobic, anti-Old Testament, pro-Paul gospel of Marcion. There is historical evidence of several groups of believers who practiced the Law as an expression of their faith in Yeshua (Yeshua) as the Messiah.**

**After Trypho asks Justin about the possibility of believing in Yeshua as the Messiah and continuing to observe the commandments, Justin writes his reply:**

***"Yes, Trypho, I conceded, there are some Christians who...desire to observe as many of the Mosaic precepts as possible...precepts which we think were instituted because of your hardness of heart...while at the same time they place their hope in Christ...'' (Ibid., ch. 47).***

**Answer for yourself: Dear Christian brother..did you hear history speak to you through Justin and his anti-semitism?**

**Well into the second century the Christians kept the Law and the testimony of Yeshua (Rev. 12 and Rev 14)! Justin, previously a pagan philosopher who was in times past a stranger to the covenant promises, alien to the commonwealth of Israel, without hope and without God and who grew us knowing no restrains to his flesh, obviously disagreed with these Law-keeping Messianic believers, but he does acknowledge their existence. Notice that the true Messianic community had not discarded the Law but continued to teach all nations to observe those things commanded by Yeshua! Some would obey and others, like Justin, would find excuses not to submit to the rule of God over their lives in many areas...today we call this "Salad Bar Christianity."**

**The best-known of these groups who believed in Yeshua and practiced the Torah were the Nazarenes and the Ebionites. There were other groups, more obscure and far less orthodox, such as the Elchasaites and the Pseudoclementines. (Austin, Bill R. Austin's Topical History of Christianity (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983, p.72f).**

**From a Gentile's viewpoint, some supposed doctrinal errors in some of these predominately Jewish groups probably contributed to the decision of the Mainstream, Gentile Church to adopt Marcion's anti-law, anti-Jewish attitude. One writer notes that "Jewish Christianity in various forms continued as a disturbing factor until almost the Fifth Century. (Ibid., p. 73).**

**It is interesting that this is the same time that Marcion's heresy supposedly "died out." Once Marcion's error (in a modified, subdued form) had been fully assimilated into the Mainstream Church, "Jewish Christianity" was no longer a "disturbing factor" because the Law-keeping Christians were greatly outnumbered by those who had adopted Marcion's attitude toward the Law. The number of those who upheld both the Torah and the Messiah (see Rev.12:17 & 14:12) was so insignificant by the Fifth Century that the Mainstream Church no longer considered them a threat. However, a remnant lives today! They could**

now be written off as a fringe group, and conveniently ignored. Though they were few in number compared to the now-Marcionized Mainstream Church, these groups who upheld both the Torah and the Messiah continued to exist until at least as late as the Tenth Century. (Flusser, David, Jewish Sources in Early Christianity, New York: Adama Books, 1987, p.88).

**Now listen up. While Mainstream Christianity, influenced by Marcion, de-emphasized the Law and over-emphasized Paul, groups such as the Ebionites totally rejected Paul, viewing him as an apostate and enemy of the Law.**

The solution is not to reject either Paul or the Law; the solution is to view Paul's writings in a way that will allow them to harmonize with what the rest of the Bible says about the Law. Only in this way will we be able to find within the New Testament the early ideas of Paul concerning the Law which were positive before he changes his religious beliefs concerning the validity of the Law later in his career. Only when Paul opposes the Law is his testimony to be discarded but a careful reader and observer of the New Testament must be on the lookout for those passages where Paul validates the Torah. This in itself is somewhat puzzling to finally come to the realization that we have a "evolution" of sorts of Paul's religious ideas away from the Torah the older he got.

# LAWS TO LIVE BY WHEN INTERPRETING PAUL

**Answer for yourself: How should a disciple of Yeshua/Yeshua view Paul's epistles? For those who desire to be faithful and to live "by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God," seven guidelines are listed below. The Bible student should keep these guidelines in mind when reading Paul's writings in order to arrive at a correct Biblical understanding.**

## PRINCIPLE 1: LOOK AT THE OVER-ALL BIBLICAL CONTEXT

**Paul's epistles, like any other part of Scripture, must be viewed in the light of the entire Bible. This means that when we are dealing with the Law, we must not focus in on a few statements Paul made, and ignore everything else the Bible says about God's Law. As pointed out earlier, Paul's writings make up approximately 5% of the Bible. Paul's writings must be understood in a way that will make them compatible with what the other 95% of the Bible says. In other words, let the other 95% of the Bible interpret the 5% that Paul wrote. If the New Testament is to be seen as the "fulfillment" of the Old Testament then let it be that; but don't get confused with "rejection" of the former foundations of the Old Covenant as any sort of "fulfillment."**

**It is important to remember that for many years, the Old Testament was the only Bible the Early Church had. The New Testament writings were gradually accepted into the canon of the Scriptures and was not finally officially accepted Canon until the 4th century! It was not until about the middle of the Second Century that the term "the Scriptures" referred to the New Testament as well as the Old Testament. (Smith, p.63).**
**Therefore, when New Testament writers mention "the Scriptures" or the commandments," they are referring to the Old Testament and not the New Testament....and this is undeniable fact!**

## PRINCIPLE 2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

**The New Jerusalem Bible, in its "Introduction to Paul, makes this statement: "It is important to remember that Paul's letters were not meant as theological treatises: most of them represent his response to a particular situation in a particular church....Paul's letters do not give any systematic and exhaustive exposition of his teaching; they presuppose the oral teaching which preceded them, and enlarge and comment only upon certain points of that. (The New Jerusalem Bible, ed. Henry Wansbrough, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1985, p.l852f).**

**Because Paul often wrote to correct particular problems in particular churches, we must have some knowledge of the situation Paul was addressing if we are to understand his writings. Sometimes the problem can be inferred from Paul's remarks, but often we are left with little or no knowledge of the situations Paul was dealing with.**

**Theologians often try to reconstruct the historical backgrounds of the epistles, and make educated guesses about the problems Paul was addressing. This can be a noble effort, if it is done in a sincere attempt to come to a clearer understanding of what Paul taught. Unfortunately, many people come to an understanding of Paul that contradicts what the rest of the Bible teaches, either by incorrectly reconstructing the historical background, or by ignoring it altogether.**

## PRINCIPLE 3: PETER'S WARNING

**It is important to bear in mind Peter's warning that Paul's letters are not easy to understand: "His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position" (2 Pet. 3:16f). Notice carefully the contrast of people's distortion of Paul's writings as they often distort the Scriptures. Peter is not, under any circumstance, calling or considering Paul's writings on equal standing with Jewish Scripture; he is only making a comparison of people's misunderstanding of both!**

**Those with little or no knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures are especially apt to misinterpret Paul's writings to their own ruin. Notice, it is not the Law-keeping disciples of Yeshua who distort Paul's epistles -- it is "lawless men" that Peter warns us about.**

## PRINCIPLE 4: JESUS' WARNING

**Early in His ministry, Yeshua spoke this warning to His followers: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt.5:17-l9).**

**Our Master's warning seems plain and simple enough to understand, yet many Christians mistakenly believe that by fulfilling the Law, he thereby abolished it. This is exactly what He is warning us not to think! "I have come to fulfill the Law," he says, "but do not even think that by fulfilling it, I am thereby abolishing it."**

**Sometimes it is easier for people outside Mainstream Christianity to see the blindness of Christians in this area. The Jewish Encyclopedia quotes Yeshua's warning of Matt.5:17, and then makes this bold statement: "The rejection of the Law by Christianity, therefore, was a departure from its Christ." (The Jewish Encyclopedia, ed. Isidore Singer New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1903, Vol.V., p.52).**

**In an article with the catchy title, "Yeshua Was Not a Christian," the writer points out that "Yeshua certainly wouldn't have been recognized as a Christian throughout his entire life." He "scrupulously adhered to the law of Moses" and "enjoined his disciples to keep every detail of the Torah." (John Murray Smoot, Yeshua Was Not a Christian," A Way in the Wilderness, ed. M. G. Einspruch, Baltimore: The Lederer Foundation, 1981, p.28).**

**A story in the New York Yiddish Forward tells of a reporter's encounter with an old Hasidic Jew in Paris years ago. This Jew had a fervent faith in Yeshua as the Messiah. When the reporter asked him about the**

**compatibility of Orthodox Judaism and belief in Yeshua, the old man replied, "Who then should believe in him -- the gentiles?" The reporter describes the old man's remarks this way: "He said that only Jews can truly accept belief in Yeshua as the Messiah and regard him as the last prophet, for gentiles can never accept such a lofty faith. It is next to impossible for them to walk in his ways, for first of all, Yeshua, as he called him, commanded to observe all the Jewish laws, the entire Torah, and gentiles do not even know this." (J. Feldman, "Yozel's Hasid," The Ox, the Ass, the Oyster, ed. Henry and Marie Einspruch, Baltimore: The Lederer Foundation, 1975, p.74.**

**Of course it is not impossible for Gentiles to accept and practice such a lofty faith. The question is, will they do it? Or will they continue to cling to the lies of Marcion?**

## PRINCIPLE 5: PAUL'S POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE LAW

**Many Christians overlook or choose to ignore the positive things Paul said about the Law. He writes, for example, "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good" (Rom.7:12). Paul says, "For in my inner being I delight in God's law" and "I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law" (Rom.7:22,25).**

**He tells Timothy, "We know that the law is good if one uses it properly" (1 Tim.1:8). To the Corinthians he writes, "Keeping God's commandments is what counts" (1 Cor.7:19). Even when explaining the righteousness that comes by faith, Paul is careful to make sure his readers know that their faith does not give them an excuse to ignore God's Law: "Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law" (Rom.3;31).**

## PRINCIPLE 6: PAUL'S NEGATIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE LAW

**We now come to a very difficult subject because within the New Testament are contradicting statements made by Paul concerning his "gospel" and the "law." What began for Paul as the negation of the Jewish leader's requirement of non-Jews to be circumcised and the imposing upon the non-Jewish males the mitzvot of circumcision to be affiliated with Israel (enforcing conversion which in reality was a deterrent to keep Jews and non-Jews separated) we find Paul over the course of his life drifting away from Judaism and the faith of the Fathers (that is if we are to believe the writings under his name are accurate as to his religious belief system). It takes years to master such studies but when one has put forth the concerted time and effort his only conclusion is that which others before him have arrived throughout history: Paul becomes an apostate from the faith of Jesus and changes the message and religion of Jesus to the Gentile world. This is a fact which is undeniable when all the evidence has been sifted and been given careful consideration. There are tons of information that exist outside this one book (the New Testament) which explains and reveals this apostasy of Paul. It truly is a sad story but one which has momentous impact upon the lives of current believers and followers of Jesus if their desire is to really be a follower of Jesus and not a follower of Paul since in reality Paul ends up rejecting the historical Jesus and his faith.**

## PRINCIPLE 7: PAUL'S EXAMPLE...ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT CONSISTENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Actions speak louder than words, the well-known proverb says. If we truly want to understand Paul's attitude towards the Law, we must look at his actions as well as his words. But we are presented with a problem here as Paul's actions and statements in the New Testament often are contradictory.**

**Even in Paul's own lifetime, were circulating that Paul taught people "to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs" (Acts 21:21). To dispel these accusations, the elders of Jerusalem had Paul go with four men who had taken a vow (probably a Nazirite vow), telling Paul that in this way "tall will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law" (Acts 21:24). As you can see there were problems not to mention Peter's first hand eyewitness discovery of Paul teaching against the Laws of Moses and the Laws of Noah in**

**Antioch when allowing his converts to practice idolatry by eating food sacrificed to idols (Paul calls those who have a problem with this practice "weak"). The summons of Paul to the Acts 15 council to answer charges was within 5 years followed by a more sever summons of him for a second time to answer charges before James and the Jerusalem church.**

**So Paul is a chameleon in the New Testament as he exhibits two different theological positions. In spite of Paul's negation of the Law we find Paul's Law-Keeping included worshipping on the Sabbath (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 16:13;17:1f,10; 18:4,19), celebrating the Biblical holy days (Acts 20:6,16), and taking a Nazirite vow which required the offering of blood sacrifices for sins (Acts 18:18). Request our article on Paul and blood sacrifices for more information.**

**It is very clear that Paul continued to keep the Law after he met Yeshua in a vision...at least when it served his purposes and agenda.**

**By keeping the Law, in the right way and for the right reasons, Paul left an example for all disciples to follow, Jew or non-Jew. When Paul fails to keep the Law then his example is to be scorned! Some people seem to think that only Jewish believers were expected to continue practicing Torah. The so-called "Great Commission" rules out this possibility. When Yeshua instructed his Jewish disciples to go to "all nations [Gentiles]," he told them to teach the Gentile nations "to obey ever thing I have commanded you [My Jewish disciples]" (Matt.28:18ff). He commanded his Jewish disciples to obey the Torah (Matt.5:17-19 & 23:1-3), and they were to teach the Gentiles to do it.**

**The key to Godly living is not to ignore the Law and elevate Paul, as Marcion did. Nor is the solution to overemphasize the Law and reject Paul, as the Ebionites and others did. The solution is to do what Paul said to do: "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Messiah" (1 Cor.11:1). The converse of this is just as true: "Don't follow my example when I don't follow Messiah" and often in the New Testament we find Paul not following the Jewish Messiah or what he would have believed or taught. If we truly follow Paul's example, as he followed the example of Messiah, we will begin to practice the Old Testament commandments that the Church has ignored or changed.**

**A. W. Tozer wrote,**

***"Probably no other portion of the Scriptures can compare with the Pauline epistles when it comes to making artificial saints. (Gems From Tozer, England: Send the Light Trust, 1969, p.18).***

**Let us avoid artificial sainthood by keeping in mind the above-mentioned seven guidelines for understanding Paul's epistles:**

- **1) over-all Biblical context,**
- **2) historical context,**
- **3) Peter's warning,**
- **4) Yeshua' warning,**
- **5) Paul's positive statements about the Law,**
- **6) Paul's negative statements about the Law,**
- **7) Paul's example...although it is not consistent in the New Testament**

**As we let the naked truth of Holy Scripture renew our minds and change our thinking, the sunlight of God's Word will dispel the mist of the ghost of Marcion. We will find ourselves transformed as the fog lifts, and as we see the Law as God always meant it to be seen: as something positive, holy, and good, "if one uses it properly"**

**(1 Tim.1:8).**

**Let those who wish to wholeheartedly follow Yeshua begin to learn the commandments, practice them, and teach them to others, for "whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt.5:l9). As we banish the legacy and influence of Marcion, the "spirit of lawlessness" from our theology, we will see the commandments not as a yoke of bondage, but as a moral guide by which we can joyfully live a life that is pleasing to the Heavenly Father. Then we will be able to rejoice in God's commandments as the psalmist did: "I will praise You with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws...I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches...I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on Your laws. I hold fast to Your statutes, 0 Lord; do not let me be put to shame. I run in the path of Your commands, for You have set my heart free...I will always obey Your law, forever and ever. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out Your precepts...Great peace have they who love Your law, and nothing can make them stumble" (Ps.119:7,14,30-32,44f,165). Shalom.**

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# HAVE WE FOLLOWED THE WRONG GOSPEL?

## THE HIDDEN BATTLE BETWEEN YESHUA, JAMES, AND PETER VS. PAUL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

***"They used to call the church a virgin", wrote Hegesippus, a church historian in the second century, "for she had not yet been corrupted by vain teachings."***

**Answer for yourself: To what "vain teachings" does Hegesippus refer?**

**Answer for yourself: Have you fell victim to believing in such "vain teachings" and not aware that you have?**

**Essentially the New Testament was the developing statement of the experience of the one virginal church. The first disciples had the unique experience of the human Jesus, then of the resurrection, then of the Holy Spirit. Before Paul these experiences were already expressed in prayers and hymns. It will be hard for you to see and admit at first, but upon completion of this series of articles you will be clearly able to see for yourself that Paul thought these pre-Pauline ideas through, and wrote his own conclusions in his epistles that often were in conflict with the original teachings of Yeshua, James, and Peter. The evangelists and writers of the original Gospels, not those to whom the early church attached authorship, had access to the memories of the first disciples, and they re-told the traditions about Yeshua in the Gospels, either in line with, or modifying, the Pauline theology that pre-dated their writing. In other words, the Gospels were written up to 50 years after Paul had penned his Epistles and they were heavily influenced by his ideas. Thus, Pauline thought was first submitted to writing, and the Gospels were originally written to correct matters at had that had been misrepresented by Paul. Sadly, these "corrections" would themselves fall victim to "additions, deletions, and creationism" through the hands of less than credible Gentile Church authorities during the second century and onward. The false teachers who cloud the later books of the New Testament are a mixture of out-of-date 'Judaizers', gnostics, syncretists and other menaces who tried to seduce the virginal church. The whole structure of Christian belief grew, as Cardinal Newman has so memorably to put it, "as an oak out of an acorn."**

**These articles are an attempt to educate the contemporary Christian to the spiritual dynamics behind the scenes of the Jerusalem Church which was constantly at odds with Paul. It was this tension between Yeshua' Apostles versus Paul which fueled the need to create writings to vindicate Paul's opinions which were not readily acceptable by the Jerusalem Church. Sadly Paul's writings, written in defense of his opinions which often contradicted Moses, as well as Yeshua, were later considered "inspired" by the Gentile Catholic Church as they searched for authenticity for the unorthodox positions on matters of faith and practice which stood in violation of the Torah. These tensions literally shaped the writing of the New Testament.**

**From as far back as we can trace it (to the 40S) there never was a single, united church. There were (in fact from the 30s) two missions: one run from Jerusalem, with Peter and the sons of Zebedee in charge, and later James, Yeshua' brother, and other members of his family; the other run by Paul, from various centers. The two missions were agreed about the supreme significance of Yeshua, but they disagreed about almost everything else - the validity of the Bible, whether the kingdom of God had arrived or not, sex, money, work, tongues, visions, healings, Yeshua's divinity, and the resurrection of the dead, for example. On the surface the New Testament gives the impression of a united, developing body of belief because it is an organized and purposeful**

**selection of writings; naturally it was selected by the winning mission, that is the Paulines, and that is why it consists of the Epistles of Paul (and his followers), and four Gospels, two of them ultra-Pauline in perspective and two which serve as bridges to the Jewish fraction in the Jerusalem Church. More on that later.**

## THE 2 MESSAGES- THE 2 MISSIONS- THE 2 COMPETING GOSPELS

**This attempt, through a series of articles, endeavors to reveal to the reader the story of the two missions, the two messages, and the two competing Gospels from as early as our evidence takes us, in practice AD 48, and runs on to about 130 AD. Through a thoughtful searching of Christian history, any reader will find the same facts I have which paint a picture that is quite different from what we hear preached in our Christian Churches today. I have drawn evidence from all the major New Testament sources and some other Christian historical sources into a single overall picture which will draw you to the inescapable conclusion to which I also have come…that Paul was not submitted to the authority of the Jerusalem church, and in all actuality preached "another Gospel" all the while warning others about "another Gospel" which in reality is the real message Yeshua desired the Apostles preach and teach to the Gentile world.**

**For every reader of the New Testament the first problem is to see the connections between the Epistles and the Gospels. The usual way of doing this is to read both against the background of Acts; but this does not guarantee correct understanding of the dynamics at work in the text. For example, how are we to reconcile Mark's passage referring to Yeshua's clear teaching to Peter and others that all food is clean (Mark 7.I5-I9) with Peter's need of a vision proclaiming 'What God has cleansed do not call unclean' (Acts 10), and then, some years later, Peter's yielding to eat unclean meat at Antioch (Gal. 2:12)? Something is missing for the above passages conflict and contradict each other! Acts is in fact a doubtful asset, for it was Luke's skillful attempt to paper over all the cracks between Paul and the Jerusalem Church. We could not tell the story of the two missions without Acts, but it is Paul who is our primary source: Paul was there at the time. It is the Epistles which enable us to see what is going on in the churches in the 50S, and we have then to use this picture to interpret the different emphases which we find in the Gospels, and which are so revealing. These articles tell the story of the early church, and the New Testament which it produced. There certainly were editions of Yeshua's sayings which have come through into our four Gospels; but it has been common ground for a century that John put these teachings into his own words, and felt free to reinterpret them in line with his own theology. It has become widely agreed more recently that the other three evangelists used some similar license or freedom. What is at issue is how much have they been reinterpreted and deviate from the original Gospel message of Christ. All four evangelists felt free to put the tradition in their own (Greek) words, and thought that it as their duty to do so, in the same way that contemporary Jews told the biblical stories. So it is perilous to infer that Yeshua said something from the fact that one or more of the Gospels said he did; but it is usually safe to think that each evangelist wrote what he himself believed to be true. The Gospels almost always give us the theology of their authors, and sometimes true tradition about Yeshua.**

## THE BASIC TENSION BETWEEN THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND PAUL

**The earliest incidents in church history of which we have a first hand account reveal an uncomfortable tension. Paul had been a member of the church at Antioch, in Syria, for some years, a the mission there had been successful in converting some gentiles (non-Jews). The question had then arisen as to how much of the Jewish Law in the Bible these Gentile converts needed to keep; and Paul had adopted a liberal policy - roughly speaking they had of course to keep the *moral* commandments, but he turned a blind eye to the *ceremonial* commandments, other than central matters like idolatry. This decision then led to a series of difficult incidents, which he records in the letter that he wrote some years later to the Galatian churches, in central Turkey. The first of these opened a dozen years or so after his conversion:**

***Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with us. I***

***went up by revelation . . .because of false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Yeshua; that they might ring us into bondage - to them we did not yield submission for a moment (Gal. 2:I-4).***

**Answer for yourself: Who are these "false brethren" and did Yeshua consider them also to be "false brethren"?**

**The 'false brethren' were Christians from Jerusalem, 350 miles away. They had been sent by James to see what was going on at Antioch, and naturally had not mentioned this at first. However, when they realized the Antioch church was not observing the Jewish Law (especially, as it turns out, over kosher meat and meats sacrificed to idols which was idolatry), they raised an objection. Paul refused to repent and change his church's ways ('to them we did not yield submission for a moment'), and regarded them as having deceived him ('false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Yeshua's). As they could *spy it out,* it must have been something they could see, like the meats eaten that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul's new revelation in Christ had nullified for him the Laws of God.**

**The 'false brethren' then reported the lax ways of the Antioch church to the Jerusalem apostles, who wanted proper order observed. Paul saw trouble coming (so he prepares the way by saying 'I went up by revelation'), and took Barnabas and Titus, a young Greek Christian, with him to talk with and discuss his position on matters of faith and practice with the apostles. The event is characterized by Luke in Acts 15 and is dated at 50 A.D. Paul saw James (Yeshua's brother), Peter end John, and Paul speaks of them in a rather sarcastic tone: 'those who are reputed to be something (what they are makes no difference to me; God shows no impartiality) . . . those who seemed to be pillars' (Gal. 2:6,9). The ill temper with which he speaks of them is a clear indication that he saw them behind the further, extensive trouble which the letter to the Galatians was written to counter.**

**The writer of Acts, himself a Gentile and pro-Pauline, would have his reader understand that the Jerusalem meeting amazingly was in fact friendly, and the cracks were papered over. But no matter how the account was softened in Acts we find the underlying tension soon reappeared following the council:**

***But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to the face because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision. And with him the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? (Gal. 2.11-14).***

**Answer for yourself: The above is Paul's version of the Antioch incident where Peter made a surprise visit and found Paul violating the Laws of Moses and teaching both Jews and non-Jews to do such in Antioch. Peter's rebuke pf Paul is hidden but understood in Paul's response. Along with the men from James who confronted Paul to his face with his deeds and even Barnabas, who for a short time had been swayed by Paul, withdrew from Paul's company in repentance and Barnabas, who had been misled by Paul, along with others, returned their hearts unto the Fathers (Moses). Did you just see that Paul compared "repentance" with "hypocrisy" in the above verse?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that this is only Paul's perspective and his account of the incident from his perspective only since he was corrected by Godly men from Jerusalem, and not meant to be taken as if Paul's opinion is God's view on the subject?**

## PETER

**Cephas is another name for Peter: Yeshua had given him the name 'Rock', which is *Cepha* in Aramaic and *Petros* in Greek`. Peter had come to Antioch because James and he were not too sure of what was going on there, and felt they had better see for themselves. At first Peter enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and the devotion of the church, and he joined in eating the meat at the church supper, without asking any questions about where it had been bought or how it had been cooked ('he ate with the Gentiles'). The issue was not only Gentiles eating unclean meat to whom Paul was supposed to teach the Laws of Noah which forbid such, but meat sacrificed to idols as well. Paul rightly understood that he could "win" more of the lost if he dropped some requirements of Torah, but this was to be his undoing shortly.**

**Some commentators suppose that James in Jerusalem suspected that Peter's kindly heart meant that he would not put his foot down; so he sent a further deputation ('certain men from dames'), and they found, just as James feared, that he was not insisting on kosher meat, purity laws, etc. ('living like a Gentile'). The idea you need to understand, if this idea be true, is that we don't know for sure Peter was eating unclean food as well, but for certain he was fellow-shipping at tables which served it, and in reality he was fellow-shipping with sin. Such, if it happened, was the compromise of Peter, for he as one who was given the Keys to the Kingdom for the Gentiles first with Cornelius, should be above compromising commandments given to Gentiles which he was not only aware of, but sworn to teach and enforce. So James' men said to him quietly, "look here, which side are you on? " But this is possibly just conjecture. For certain however something was able to be "spyed" out or seen that tipped off the men from James and Peter that the actions and teachings of Paul were a compromise of truth and a rejection of Jewish Covenant Law.**

## WHO ARE WE TO FOLLOW: PETER OR PAUL?

**The following Saturday nigh there was a scene. Peter said,' Before we go any further, I have to ask, Is this meat kosher? Was it bought at the Jewish butcher's?' Well, the meat actually came from the Antioch market; so Peter said, 'Then I'm afraid that all God's people will have to go next door for the concluding Sabbath service ("separated themselves" meaning becoming holy once again in regard to uncleanness); and leave this meat for those who have not yet put themselves under God's Law'. It was a moment of crisis: everyone there had to decide whether Peter or Paul was right. Paul naturally hoped that his church would stand solidly with him, but in fact all the Jewish members had been feeling guilty of breaking the Law, and they sided with Peter; then Paul's closest ally Barnabas felt that was right ('was carried way by their hypocrisy'). The whole of Paul's church, once rebuked by the men from James and Peter, left Paul and went next door and removed themselves from such sin. Paul revels in it and twists the account into a one-sided presentation where the unsuspecting reader would thing Paul was right and the others were wrong!**

**Answer for yourself: Again, Paul would have us understand that Barnabas' repentance at eating unclean food and food sacrificed to pagan idols, is to be understood as "hypocrisy" instead of "holiness". Do you hear such absurdity in Paul's account?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you, now having all the facts, and no longer reading Paul as if he can do no wrong, can you now see how easily you have been misled and believed a lie most of your life concerning God's wishes for you and your diet?**

**This naturally made Paul very angry, because in effect his Gentile converts were being excommunicated; so he explained to Peter where he had gone wrong ('I withstood him to the face because he stood condemned'). Before the James party arrived he had joined in and eaten the non-kosher meat ('lived like a gentile'); now that they**

**had frightened him, he was trying to force Jewish ways on the Gentile Christians ('compel them to live like we'). As for Paul this was a double life, or hypocrisy; but not for God! The die had been cast by now, and the Peter party, the Petrines, had won the round.**

## SO WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

**Although the Petrines won the battle the Pauline won the war. In the long run the Paulines won, and Christians today do not eat kosher meat nor are circumcised as a matter of faith as a sign of the Covenant.**

***Idolatry, just like with Antioch and the Pauline Gospel which was rebuked by Peter and the men from James, lies hidden in many of the teachings of Pauline Christianity today. The Paulines have won...that is until we die and find that God has got a different opinion on the matter than Paul!***

**In consequence non-Jewish readers of the story usually sympathize with Paul, and are apt to speak of the Jerusalem Christian attitude as being legalistic. But if we are to follow the story open-mindedly, we must be fair to James and Peter. If you accept the Bible as the word of God (as they all did, Paul included), then it is not for you to say that one of God's rules or Laws, say for example "not murdering," is important, and another, circumcision, is legalism: if God has said it is to be done, that is the end of the matter. Furthermore, many of the rules may need some explanation. Leviticus I7:14 says that you may not eat blood in your meat: well, what exactly are you to do to make sure there is "no blood"? Sometimes one text says one thing and one another. If God has told us what he wishes us to do, then surely we must have such points discussed by experts, and we must follow their conclusions. That is what the Jewish Sages had been doing for centuries, and Peter and James were honoring God's Word by taking their interpretations seriously. Paul, on the other hand, knew that the Gentile church-members would be repelled by a demand that they should observe such rulings, and he thought it was obvious that they did not apply now that Christ had come: so he speaks of 'our freedom' which we have in Christ, and of 'bringing us into bondage', and he calls Peter and the others hypocrites because they had either rejected his "special gospel" or had first been swayed by him to relax their observance of their Covenant and then, when called upon the carpet for their actions, withdrew and repented when shown that they were in error and sin.**

## MISUNDERSTANDING COSTS US NOW AND LATER AS WELL

**Although the issue about Jewish rulings has faded away, the point about interpreting the Bible has not, and a modern example may help the non-Jewish reader to balance his sympathies. The film *Chariots of Fire* featured the partially true story of the Scottish runner, Eric Liddell, who was picked to run for the United Kingdom in the Paris Olympics of I924, and declined to run because the heat was on a Sunday. He was a pious Presbyterian Christian, later a missionary, who would not break the sabbath. The Bible law is set out in Ex. 20:8, 'Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy', and for Liddell that settled the question, let the Prince of Wales say whet he would. Now the attentive reader may notice that *two* steps have been jumped in the argument. First, Exodus goes on to say that the sabbath (rest) day is to be kept on the *seventh* day of the week, that is *Saturday;* so Sunday activities are not covered at all. Secondly, while Exodus clearly forbids work on the sabbath, no mention is made of *running* as work. When people have been brought up in a long and unchallenged religious environment, the community's interpretations of its traditions have all the authority of the Bible itself. So although secular modern man may think gold medals more important than fussy old superstitions, he can still empathize with Liddell, and admire his integrity; and he ought (and even more ought the religious man) to empathize with and admire James and Peter for their integrity.**

**The problem between James/Peter and Paul was one which would not go away in a hurry. Here is**

**Ignatius, a Pauline, the Bishop of Antioch seventy years later; he is on his way to be martyred in Rome, and the scene is Philadelphia in modern Turkey, not far from the Galatian churches Paul had been writing to:**

***If anyone propound Judaism to you, do not listen to him . . . For even though certain persons desired to deceive me after the flesh, the spirit is not deceived . . . I cried out, when I was among you; I spoke with a loud voice, with God's own voice, 'Give heed to the. bishop and the presbytery and deacons' . . . I heard certain people saying, 'If I do not find it in the ancient texts, I do not believe it in the Gospel'; and when I said to them, 'It is written', they answered me, 'That is the question' (Philadelphians, 6ff.).***

**The Philadelphian church is split. It has 'Jewish Christians' in it, who propound Judaism and trust only the Old Testament, the ancient texts; and it has Gentile Christians, who do not keep the Jewish food laws, circumcision, etc., and who have some other, Christian book, which Ignatius calls 'the Gospel'. Ignatius has come as a stranger to the Church, and the Jewish party has kept quiet (desired to deceive me); but be had met this kind of tension before, and he soon guessed what has up. Now Paul used to run a mission for a short period and then move on, normally; and when he left, he used to appoint a committee of senior people ('the presbytery') and other of officers ('deacons') to run the church. In time the most senior person, often the one in those house the church met, became known as the 'overseer' (Greek episcopos) or bishop. So Ignatius shouts out that the church should follow these leaders, or in other words, the Pauline party and not the Petrine party); and like some modern preachers, he thinks that if he shouts it loud it is because he is inspired (God's own voice).**

**These are two first-hand accounts of Christian church meetings, from either end of the period which these articles cover. The row between Paul and Peter in Antioch happened right before or just after the Jerusalem Council (opinions differ); the one between Ignatius and the Jewish Christians at Philadelphia took place about 117 A.D. None of our New Testament books were written before the dispute at Antioch, and most had been written before Ignatius' martyrdom. It is not an accident that they both reveal the same basic tension, for this tension was certain to appear wherever the Pauline mission went. For there were Jews in every major center throughout the Roman Empire, and Paul's normal preaching method was to go to the synagogue first. Even if he did not convert some Jews, the Gentiles whom he won over had been used to Jewish ways and respected the Old Testament as the word of God. But Paul knew that the Gentile mission would never go far if it got tied up with kosher meat and tithing rules; and he was totally persuaded that Christ had died to save all mankind. So everywhere it was inevitable that there would be divisions on this issue. Of course there might be many other divisions, but this division was bound to come. There were two missions: the Jerusalem mission headed by Yeshua's central disciples, Peter, James and John, and by Yeshua's family, his brothers James, Jude and the others; and the Pauline mission, headed by Paul, with centers first at Antioch, later at Ephesus in western Turkey, and finally in Europe. This examination of this dynamic struggle is an account of the first century of church life in the light of this basic split.**

**Most people today live in tolerant communities. In some communities there is an issue which you cannot escape; and when national and religious identity are involved, as they were with the Petrine and Pauline missions, you have issues for which men will die, and kill. It is probable that both Paul and Ignatius died in partial consequence of the hatred of Jewish Christians (that is, those loyal to Peter and James); and we shall see that the Paulines, especially St. John, hated the Jewish Christians with an equal ferocity.**

**The two missions are there in Galatians, with their leaders: 'when they saw that I had been entrusted with the**

**gospel to the uncircumcision [the non-Jews] as Peter had been with the gospel to the circumcision [the Jews]; for he who authorized Peter for the mission to the circumcision authorized me too for the mission to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:7). The issue about the Law is the subject of Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans, and crops up in virtually every other book in one form or the other. But the Law was only the first of many differences between the two missions; and to understand what those differences were, and why they arose, is to understand the New Testament.**

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# THE HIDDEN CONFLICT THAT LIES BENEATH THE PAGES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

**The question of guidance was of great importance for the early church.**

**Answer for yourself: Who was to be the authority and give direction to this new movement; the Jesus Movement within Biblical Judaism?**

**To answer this question to its fullest we need to re-examine the events that surround the first Church Council as found in Acts 15. In this article I will refer to this Church Council as the Nazorean Council. Others have attached other names to it such as the Ebionite Council, but for purposes of this article it will be called the Nazorean Council.**

***The authority of the Nazorean Council derived from personal knowledge and experience of what Yeshua had said and done in his public life: its chief members had received Yeshua's direct mandate and could pass this on to their successors since having lived with and had personally witnessed his life and ministry for themselves.***

**But there existed a competition for authority. The creators of the new Gentile authority (Petro-Pauline Propagandists) had to establish a valid title to secure adhesion on the part of the churches.**

- This is why it was so vital to them to use the name and fame of **Peter.**
- But it was also essential to assert a claim to the possession of a higher mandate, that of the continuing voice of Yeshua speaking not from earth but from heaven. Hence the importance of **Paul,** who had been the first to set up an independent authority on the grounds that by revelations he was the recipient of the guidance of the Christ in heaven through the Holy Spirit.

The church at Rome built on the Pauline foundation, and so was able to make guidance by the Holy Spirit the chief source of Christian authority for the future. In due course any doctrine which the Church found it desirable to proclaim as "Universal Truth" could be attributed to this guidance, even when there was no warrant for it in the New Testament itself.

**Initially, however, despite great successes the church at Rome did not have everything its own way in formulating the new Christianity. In the East and in Egypt the Christian communities were still considerably under the influence of the original Jewish Christian teaching, and a number of them had a substantial proportion of Jews and converts to Judaism among their members. The epistles from Rome bear witness to this in their attacks on the advocates of Judaic doctrines. In these communities no justification was seen for overturning the instruction of the Apostles which had emanated from Jerusalem before the war. This was indeed a time of grave uncertainty and circumstances called for an agonizing reappraisal; but it was not evident that the situation required a wholesale abandonment of former positions.**

**Some people, certainly, would bitterly resent and oppose the contentions of the Petro-Pauline propagandists.**

**But even those who were greatly impressed by the seeming authenticity of the epistles now put forth, and were especially attracted by the Gospel of Mark, would to an extent resist the implication that the original apostolic body had been superseded. There were yet living members of the family of Yeshua and numerous persons who had known and heard his Apostles. The prevailing tendency would be towards compromise. And this is what we find in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, which combine Eastern and Western sources of information, the former particularly (Eastern Christianity/Petrines) incorporating sayings and ideas which cannot be reconciled with the terms of the new Christianity, to the discomfort of subsequent exegetes (Western Christianity/Paulines).**

# PETRINE VS PAULINE CHRISTIANITY

**The real struggle was between the apostolic doctrine that Yeshua was the Messiah of God descended from David and the new teaching based on interpretation of Pauline Christology that he was the Divine Son of God sent for human salvation and was not a political figure. Paul himself accepted that Yeshua was born of the line of David, though demonstrated to be Son of God by the resurrection (Rom. 4:3). This was opposite to what the Eastern Church/Petrines believed as attested by the baptism of Yeshua where God "adopts" Yeshua and calls Him his Son. It is this major struggle which will divide Jewish Christianity, or should I say Petrine (Jerusalem Christianity) from Pauline Christianity in the early church.**

**What is important for us to understand in our research is that it was the Church of the West (Paulines) who were anxious not to stress the Messianic aspect in its endeavour to procure the toleration of the Roman Government, for in fact Rome considered any claimant to the throne or Kingship of Israel, or any nation for that matter, a political threat against the Emperor and Rome (nothing had changed since the days of Jesus). In the East, where there was much hostility to Roman government and considerable loyalty to the authority of the Nazorean Council, there was no such inhibition. The ruling family, the Heirs of Yeshua, gloried in their Davidic descent and called attention to it from their genealogical records.**

**Thus the authors of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke would not and could not, if their books were to find acceptance, omit the cardinal testimony of a substantial part of the Church. The Gospel of Mark had had a powerful effect, and was therefore employed by the other Evangelists, but the fact that the end of Mark is lacking has suggested to scholars a scarcity of copies of the work and a loss of popularity once Matthew and Luke were in existence. These other Gospels, Matthew and Luke, were more Petrine (reflecting Eastern Christianity and its beliefs); neither neglected nor played down the Messianism of primitive Christianity, while responsive to the Paulinist teaching of the West which were considered heretical by the Jerusalem Church.**

**This comes out particularly in the Nativity narratives.**

**While Jesus is born of a virgin through the agency of the Holy Spirit he is none the less in Matthew the predestined king of the Jews, and through Joseph his legal father, is descended from David. Luke makes the angel Gabriel announce to Mary, 'You will conceive in your womb and have a son, whom you are to call Yeshua. He will be a great man, and be termed "Son of the Most High", and the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David: he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and his sovereignty shall be without end' (Luke. 1:31-33). The angel of the Lord also announces to certain Jewish shepherds at Bethlehem, 'I bring you news of a great joy which will be shared by all the people, that today in David's town a deliverer has been born to you, none other than the Lord Messiah' (Luke 2:10-11). No Roman official would have had any joy from reading these words.**

**So long as there were Jews at the head of Christian affairs in the East, that is to say down to A.D. 132 (Down to the invasion of the Jews under Hadrian. There were fifteen successions of bishops (of Jerusalem), all of whom, they say, were Hebrews from the first and received the knowledge of Christ pure and unadulterated. . . . For at that time the whole Church under them consisted of faithful Hebrews, who continued from the time of the apostles until the siege of Jerusalem which then took place' (Euseb. Eccl Hist. *IV. v.).* Their names are given as**

**James, Simeon, Justus, Zaccheus, Tobias, Benjamin, John, Matthew, Philip, Seneca, Justus II, Levi, Ephraim, Joseph and Judas). What is important for us to understand is that there was some check to the relinquishment in this region of features of the Church's original teaching, though its waning effectiveness was further weakened by the persecuting policy of Domitian, the Emperor of Rome.**

**One of the products of that persecution, the book of Revelation published in Asia Minor, in spite of subsequent revision retains reference to Yeshua as 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David'. This apocalypse, emphatically anti-Roman, continues to proclaim, 'The dominion of the world has become the dominion of our Lord and his Messiah, and he shall reign for ever and ever' (Rev. 11:15). The statement is of great importance since 'our Lord' here is not Yeshua but God himself, and Yeshua is distinguished from God as his Messiah. The position of the Revelation is that of Psalm 2, a favorite with the early Christians. It is this understanding of the nature of Christ which the early Jewish believers held in common. We call them Nazorean or Ebionites today, but sadly their belief system about Yeshua has been re-tooled by the line of Gentile Church Councils which rejected their teachings and substituted their own. More on that later.**

**Another work, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (Didache), which also underwent some later changes, nevertheless preserves the same concept about Messiah in the eucharistic prayer over the cup of wine: 'We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the holy vine of David thy servant, which thou didst make known to us through Yeshua thy servant; to thee be glory for ever' (Didache 9:2). The relationship of Yeshua to God is the same as that of David to God, to whom alone prayer is to be addressed. The prayer, like others in the *Didache,* reflects Hebrew liturgical forms. The production in the East of documents in the name of the Twelve Apostles was one way of hitting back at Western Petro-Paulinism which opposed what Yeshua had originally taught.**

**It is by no means easy to speak of early reactions to what was being put out from the West because of lack of records. But one effect of the prominence given to Peter through the Roman initiative may possibly be seen in the outcrop of Petrine literature in the second century, such as The Preaching of Peter, the Gospel of Peter, the Teaching of Peter, and the Revelation of Peter. An uncanonical quotation which brings in Peter as leader occurs in the Homily known as the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians.**

**On the other hand, of uncertain derivation, are the canonical epistles in the names of James and Jude, brothers of Yeshua, which attack Paulinist doctrine. II Peter is a kind of reply to Jude, borrowing from it and at the same time endorsing the authority of Paul.**

**After the middle of the second century in the *Memoirs* of Hegesippus we have the records, fragmentary unfortunately, of a man who endeavoured to promote a truly catholic Christianity by collecting traditions of East and West and thus furnishing material of consequence for a general ecclesiastical history. We also observe in the remains of the *Exposition of the Dominical Oracles* by Papias of Hierapolis (c. A.D. 135) the concern of another Eastern Christian to assemble as much as possible of what the Apostles and Elders had taught of the things said and done by Christ as recalled by those who had heard him.**

# MEASURES TAKEN TO CONTROL PAUL AND WESTERN CHRISTIANITY

**A telling counterblast to the new Christianity of the West, however, could only come from the Nazoreans/Ebionites, the direct heirs of the apostolic doctrine. Ever since the destruction of Jerusalem they had undergone great vicissitudes which made it extremely difficult for them to have adequate contact with other bodies of Christians and thus to be sufficiently informed of what was going on. They were in danger from the Romans, especially their leaders of the family of Yeshua who proclaimed their Davidic descent, as actual or potential rebels. They were regarded as a menace by rabbinical Judaism, now concerned to put a damper on apocalyptic and Messianic enthusiasm in**

order that the Jews should be able to settle down quietly under the new conditions and avoid the risk of Roman reprisals and restrictions of their religious liberties. Consequently, the rabbinists from about A.D. 90 sought to ban them, the Essenes, and all Last Day fanatics from the synagogues. The rabbinists attempted to suppress the reading of apocalyptic writings, which many Jews regarded as inspired, and denounced those who calculated the Time of the End. Under Gamaliel II a prayer against sectaries was composed by Samuel the Little to be used in public worship in the synagogues. This may be the prayer inserted in the Eighteen Benedictions, originally commencing, 'And for sectaries let There be no hope' (i.e. of a share in the world to come). The rabbinical reference is Talmud Babli, *Berachoth,* fol. 28b-29a. **One ruling seems directed against the Essenes: 'If a man said, "I will not go before the Ark (i.e. the sacred chest containing scrolls of the Torah) in colored raiment," he may not even go before it in white raiment' (Mishinah, *Megillah, iv.* 8-9).**

**These descendents of Yeshua, as well as the original church of Nazoreans/Ebionites were looked at despairingly by later Christians on account of their Jewish nationalism and maintenance of Jewish observances. Thus, it is easy to see that Paulinist Churches despised the Nazorean/Ebionite steadfastness in rejecting this new Paulinist teaching about Yeshua, thus again increasingly despising them for their refusal to acknowledge his deity. The early Gentile Catholic Church Fathers, in their natural opposition to Jewish Christianity, ignored all evidence that Jewish Christianity represented an unbroken tradition from the time of the Apostles.**

**Oppressed and afflicted, forced to live for the most part in outlying areas in Galilee, Auranitis and Gaulanitis, the Nazoreans/Ebionites nevertheless continued active and made numerous Jewish converts. In certain places they could openly have synagogues and communities. They suffered especially in the persecution initiated by Domitian, and later in the Jewish revolt under Bar-Kokhba when they refused to recognize this leader's Messianic claims. In the Jewish war which lately raged, Bar-Kokhba, the leader of the revolt of the Jews (A.D. 132-5), gave orders that Christians alone should be led to cruel punishments, unless they would deny Yeshua Christ and utter blasphemy' (Justin, I. Apol. xxxi. The majority of those affected in Palestine must have been Jewish Christians at this time.**

**The Nazoreans/Ebionites, having their own problems, could devote little attention to developments in the Church at large, especially in the Paulinist Churches in the West, and probably before the first quarter of the second century they were not too familiar with what had been happening. By the time they could make a rejoinder there had been changes of emphasis in their own outlook, and some groups had acquired various eccentricities as a result of new teaching and relationships with remnants of Baptist, Essene, Samaritan and other sects of 'Saints' of the pre-war period.**

## DIGGING DEEPER TO FIND CAUSES FOR THE REJECTION OF PAUL BY YESHUA'S CHURCH IN THE FIRST CENTURY

**Our information about the Nazoreans/Ebionites is still slender, and outside the New Testament no documents are earlier than A.D. 150. Many of the authorities who can be quoted are not well informed or are hostile to the original Jewish Yeshua Movement in Jerusalem. We therefore have to run ahead somewhat to glean what we can of Nazorean/Ebionite reactions to the Petro-Pauline propaganda. While what we can learn derives from sources extending from the second century to the tenth, and allowing for the fact that much of it is second-hand knowledge, there is a remarkable amount of consistency in the traditions which argues both for their antiquity and general reliability.**

**Antagonism to Paulinism was not, of course, a Nazorean/Ebionite novelty of the second century. Nazorean/Ebionite feeling must indeed have been strong to leave behind such a legacy of enmity, so that for centuries in their teaching the Nazoreans/Ebionites harked back to the initial conflict, embroidering the account with additional hostile details. But rankling memories of what after all had taken place a long while ago**

**would not sufficiently account for the intensity of the animosity betrayed subsequently. Remote generations could not have kept these memories alive so acutely unless much had transpired later to fan the flames.**

***We see the justification for the persistent and virulent attacks on Paul in the realization by the Nazoreans/Ebionites that an idolatrous religion had been founded on his thinking, a religion which blasphemously identified Yeshua with God.***

**The crime was aggravated by an assertion that the new Faith was the true apostolic Faith; by having invented and perverted many things about Yeshua; by having been plotted in Rome, enemy of God's people; and by the audacious falsehood that the venerated Peter had apostasized and given his blessing to Paulinism. As most of the Church progressively went over to the new religion, and dared to call the Church of the Apostles heretical, and when this religion finally became that of the Roman Empire and mercilessly persecuted the inheritors of the Truth and drove them away, the seed sown by Paul had indeed become a tree bearing bitter fruit. No wonder that by the Nazoreans/Ebionites Paul was vilified and execrated continually!**

## TESTIMONY OF OTHERS TO THE EXISTENCE OF TWO OPPOSING CHRISTIANITIES

**The first admission of the existence of two opposing Christianities comes from Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with the Jew Trypho. Justin was born in Samaria at Flavia Neapolis, the modern Nablus. He studied philosophy and later became a Christian. His travels as an evangelist finally brought him to Rome, where he suffered martyrdom about A.D. 165. While Justin subscribed in the main to Western Christianity, he still adhered to some of the tenets of the East, including that of the restoration of Jerusalem and the millennial reign of Christ on earth. He did not agree with Nazorean Christianity, but tolerantly refused to condemn it as the Neo-Pauline Christians were doing. In the Dialogue Justin allows that the Jewish followers of Yeshua were entitled, if they chose, to observe the Mosaic Law, though he does not approve of their requiring Gentile believers to do so. He cannot go along with those Paulinists who would have no intercourse with the Jewish Christians or give them hospitality, and denied that they could be saved. He himself was prepared to associate with them in all things as kinsmen and brethren.**

**We can see from Justin's statements that by the middle of the second century Western Christianity had achieved dominance and the old Faith of the Apostolic Church was now being treated as sectarian. The fundamental difference between the two Christianities was that the new (Western/Paulinist) proclaimed that Christ was God, while the old (Eastern /Jerusalem /Petrine) declared that Christ was *of* God. Justin sides with the Christodeists, holding that Christ existed as God before the ages and submitted to be born as man while remaining God even as man. But he will not denounce those who hold the contrary conviction, that Yeshua was solely man, anointed by election and thus becoming the Christ (Messiah). The vital thing, whether Yeshua was God or not God, is that he should be acknowledged as Christ (Justin, Dial. With Trypho, 47-49).**

**This, however, is not the position of Irenaeus a few years later, who though he too came from the East and was a millennarian is more decisively in the Roman camp as a result of his close relations with the Roman Church when bishop of Lyons. He emphatically affirms the dogma of the West that as Son of God Yeshua Christ is God, and expresses its creed in terms that anticipate the Nicene formula of the fourth century (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, I. 10.1; II. 1.5). But he did not depend wholly on Western thought, being also influenced, as Justin may have been, by the Fourth Gospel, whose author was the protagonist in the East of the deity of Christ as the incarnate Word of God.**

**Irenaeus attacks the Nazoreans as heretics under the name of Ebionites. The name is from the Hebrew for 'the Poor', a designation employed both by the Essenes and the early Christians to signify their humble following of the way of God. Later Christian writers would have it either that Ebion was the name of the man who founded the sect, or that at any rate the name was rightly bestowed on those who had a poor opinion of the dignity of Christ. Whether one branch of the Nazoreans particularly adopted this name is not known for certain; but it must be allowed that Ebionism came to represent those Jewish Christians who deviated in some respects from the main body, being strict vegetarians and therefore opposed to animal sacrifices. It would, however, be going too far on the available evidence to regard the Ebionites as a denomination wholly distinct from the Nazoreans.**

**According to Irenaeus, those of this persuasion believe that Yeshua was born in the normal manner as the son of Joseph and Mary and declared to be the Christ at his baptism. 'They use the Gospel of Matthew only,' he says, 'and reject the Apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the Law. As to the prophetical writings, they endeavour to expound them in a somewhat singular manner they practice circumcision, persevere in the observance of those customs which are enjoined by the Law, and are so Judaic in their way of life, that they even adore Jerusalem as if it were the House of God. (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, I. 26.1-20).**

**The passage is important in many respects. The reference to the use of the prophetical writings indicates that the Jewish Christians employed similar methods to those of the Essenes in interpreting the Old Testament in the manner found in the Commentaries among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Of course in relation to Yeshua as Messiah this had been done in testimonies in the Gospels and elsewhere; but what Irenaeus states is confirmed by remains of the Nazorean Commentary on Isaiah quoted by Jerome (Jerome Commentary on Isaiah, quoted by Schonfied, Saints Against Caesar, p. 180f.). Evidently, too, the Nazoreans turned towards Jerusalem in prayer like other Jews. Jews in the West turn to the East during the recitation of the Eighteen Benedictions. The Nazoreans when they fled to Mesopotamia had to turn towards the West in order to face Jerusalem. But we are particularly interested that it is here for the first time stated that the Nazoreans acknowledged only one Gospel, that of Matthew, and that they would have nothing to do with the Pauline epistles, denouncing Paul as an apostate from the Law.**

**Regarding the Nazorean Gospel, Irenaeus elsewhere says that Matthew had written his Gospel in Hebrew, and he probably deduced this from what Papias of Hierapolis in Asia Minor had set down some fifty years previously that 'Matthew compiled the Oracles in Hebrew, and each one interpreted them as he was able'. Papias was almost certainly referring to a primitive collection of Biblical passages which proved that Yeshua was the Messiah, which Matthew may well have prepared and a copy of which was in the possession of the Nazoreans (Passover Plot, Schonfield, pp. 234-238). But it is established from many Patristic sources that they also had a Hebrew or Aramaic Gospel comparable to those in the New Testament, reputed to be by Matthew, but commonly known to the churches as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and of which extracts have been preserved. A discussion of the subject would take us too far afield, but we may briefly say, because this is relevant, that the composition of a Gospel of the type of the canonical books would be unlikely as the natural literary expression of a Jewish body. The cause of its production would more probably be deliberately to counter the New Testament Gospels and undermine their effect on Jewish Christians by furnishing a document that was consistent with Nazorean/Ebionite teaching and tradition. The passages available for examination tend to support this view, and it would appear that in due course more than one form was in circulation, such as that significantly entitled The Gospel of the Twelve or According to the Apostles. The remains we have exhibit knowledge of canonical Matthew and Luke. It is possible that John was also known. The only effective way to reply was by composing a corrective Gospel.**

**We have abundant evidence that many groups from eccentric Christians to outright Gnostics were producing Gospels from the second century onward to get their ideas across under apostolic names, and their literature also included Acts, Epistles and Revelations. We learn from Epiphanius bishop of Salamis in the fourth century that the Jewish Christians had created an anti-Pauline Acts of the Apostles. Of**

**the Ebionites he writes: 'They have other Acts, which they call those of the Apostles, in which are many things filled with their impiety, whence they have incidentally furnished themselves with arms against the truth. For they set forth certain Ascents and Instructions in the Ascents of James, representing him as holding forth against both temple and sacrifices and against the fire on the altar, and many other things filled with empty talk; so that they are not ashamed in them to denounce Paul in certain invented utterances of the malignant and deceitful work of their false Apostles (Epiphanius, Panarion (Refutations of All Heresies), xxx. 16 & 23).**

**Epiphanius is an important if erratic witness. He was himself of Jewish origin and became a violent champion of Christian orthodoxy. He became acquainted with another Jewish convert to Nicene Christianity called Joseph who had been a student in the household of the Jewish Patriarch Hillel II. This Joseph reported that in Jewish possession were Hebrew copies of Matthew, John and the Acts of the Apostles, and it is to be inferred that these were books obtained from the Nazoreans rather than translations of the canonical Gospels made either by the Church or by the Jews themselves. When Jewish Gospel parody was produced in the Toldoth Jeshu this was based on the Nazorean-Ebionite Gospel and not on he canonical texts.**

**We have some confirmation, therefore, that the Jewish Christians felt obliged to combat the onslaughts of the Church Fathers and reveal the errors of the New Testament writings. We should not conclude that the Nazoreans were entirely inventing: they must have had a certain amount of genuine traditions which they had preserved and which gave a different picture of Christian beginnings. But polemics forced them to go much further when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire and they became the victims of Christian persecution. Their attacks on Paul as the root cause of what had happened became more virulent, and they were now saying that his parents had been Greeks, that he came to Jerusalem because he desired to marry the high priest's daughter and therefore became a proselyte to Judaism. When his suit was rejected, angry at the slight, he wrote against circumcision, the Sabbath and the Law (Epiphanius, Panarion, xxx).**

**Lately further light has been thrown on the Jewish Christians and their attitude to the dominant Christian Faith by an Arabic manuscript in Istanbul dating from the end of the tenth century. The manuscript is No. 1575 in the Shehid 'All Pasha collection in Istanbul, and entitled The Establishment of Proofs for the Priesthood of Our Master Mohammed, by 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Hamadani chief Qadi of Rayy (d. I024/5). This important text has been edited and translated by Pro£ Shlomo Pines as regards the anti-Christian section and proved to contain much Jewish Christian material. See Pines, 'The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According *to* a New Source' (Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Vol. II, No. 13, Jerusalem). This document reflects to a considerable extent the developments between the fifth and tenth century and much relates to the Islamic challenge to Christianity. But the author, a Muslim controversialist, appears to have had access to Jewish Christian literature or sources of information which furnished him with ammunition, and what he presents reveals much more of the Nazorean arguments and traditions and rabid anti-Paulinism.**

**We have yet to deal with another vital consequence of the bid for leadership of the church. Rome initiated, in the latter part of the first century, tactics which involved a denigration of the original Christian authority vested in the Apostles of Yeshua and members of his family, and conveyed that Peter was the supreme spokesman for the Twelve, and that he had been converted to Paulinism. This enterprise, when it had fully matured and brought into being the new Christian religion, could only give rise to a counter-attack by the Nazoreans in which it was demonstrated that the true teaching of and about Yeshua was held by the Apostles mandated by him while on earth, that the rightful chief representative of Yeshua had been his brother James, and that Peter had never defected to Paulinism.**

**The only substantial presentation of the Nazorean response is contained in the pseudo-Clementines, the Homilies and Recognitions. These works unfortunately are only available to us in Latin translations from the Greek, to an extent abridged and edited, made towards the end of the fourth century by Rufinus of Aquileia. The original compositions probably belong to the early third century. As they stand the ideas expressed are not**

**exclusively Ebionite, and there is a mingling of the doctrines of various Syrian bodies. But incorporated in the text are elements from second-century works, and these are often Jewish Christian.**

**The Clementines have two main ingredients, which are interwoven. The first is a romance telling how a Roman family was broken up by misfortune and its members scattered abroad undergoing many sufferings. But there is a happy ending, since all are finally reunited, having become or becoming Christians. This tale previously existed as a distinct book of which we have a Syriac exemplar. The second ingredient is a narrative of Peter's pursuit of the anti-Christian Simon Magus (scholars recognize this as a code name for Paul who himself was gnostic on many beliefs) from city to city to combat his teaching and influence. This too probably goes back to an independent work entitled The Travels of Peter. In the Clementines the hero of the romance part of the story is Clement of Rome, converted by Barnabas, who journeys to Palestine to become Peter's disciple, and it is in the course of Peter's travels that Clement becomes reunited with his father, mother and two brothers. Among other distinct works drawn upon are The Preaching of Peter and the Ascents of James referred to by Epiphanius.**

**Preserved by the Clementines is a clear aim to counter Western propaganda. It is not Peter who has joined the Paulinists but the esteemed Clement of Rome who comes to Palestine and joins Peter and the true Apostolic Church, which is headed by James. Paul is alluded to as 'the enemy' and the arch-heretic Simon Magus is also used as a medium through whom Paul and Pauline teaching are attacked. The obvious intention was to reach Christians who had gone over to the opposing camp. Prefacing the Homilies is a letter from Peter to James, of which we may quote a part. Here we have a retort in kind.**

***'Peter to James, the lord and bishop of the holy Church under the Father of all, through Yeshua Christ wishes peace always.***

***'Knowing, my brother, your eager desire for that which is for the advantage of us all, I beg and beseech you not to communicate to any one of the Gentiles the books of my preachings which I sent to you, nor to anyone of our own race before trial; but if anyone has been proved and found worthy, then to commit them to him, after the manner in which Moses delivered his to the Seventy who succeeded to his chair. Wherefore also the fruit of that caution appears even till now.... In order, therefore, that the like may also happen to those among us as to those Seventy, give the books of my preachings to our brethren, with the like mystery of initiation, that they may indoctrinate those who wish to take part in teaching; for if it is not so done our word of truth will be rent into many opinions. And this I know, not as being a prophet, but as already seeing the beginning of this very evil. For some among the Gentiles have rejected my legal preaching, attaching themselves to certain lawless and trifling preaching of the man who is my enemy. And these things some have attempted while I am still alive, to transform my words by certain various interpretations, in order to the dissolution of the Law; as though I also myself were of such a mind, but did not freely proclaim it, which God forbid! For such a thing were to act in opposition to the Law of God which was spoken by Moses, and was borne witness to by our Lord in respect of its eternal continuance. . . . But these men, professing I know not how, to know my mind, undertake to explain my words, which they have heard of me, more intelligently than I who spoke them, telling their catechumens that this is my meaning, which indeed I never thought of But if, while I am still alive, they dare thus to misrepresent me, how much more will those who shall come after me dare to do so."***

## *In the Recognitions 'Peter' warns believers against accepting any other authority and teaching than that of the Nazorean Council and attacks the new Christianity of the West.*

***'Our Lord, confirming the worship of the One God, answered him (i.e. Satan): "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." And he, terrified by this answer, and fearing lest the true religion of the One and True God should be restored, hastened straightway to send forth into this world false prophets, and false apostles, and false teachers, who should speak indeed in the name of Christ, but should accomplish the will of the demon. Wherefore observe the greatest caution, that you believe no teacher, unless he brings from Jerusalem***

*the testimonial of James the Lord's brother, or of whosoever may come after him. For no one, unless he has gone up thither, and there has been approved as a fit and faithful teacher for preaching the word of Christ . . . is by any means to be received. But let neither prophet nor apostle be looked for by you at this time, besides us. For there is one true Prophet, whose words we twelve Apostles preach; for he is "the acceptable year of God", having us Apostles as his twelve months.' (Recognitions, IV, xxxiv-xxxv. There is no room for Paul as the 13th Apostle).*

Paul had contended that his gospel was the true one because he had received it by direct revelation from the Christ in heaven, unlike the twelve Apostles who depended on the teaching of Christ while on earth. The new Christianity, which gave rise to the Catholic Church, continued to hold that in the formulation of its doctrine it was progressively guided by revelation through the Holy Spirit. Peter in the Clementines combats this claim in his controversy with Simon Magus (alias Paul). Simon argues:

*"You (Peter) professed that you had well understood the doctrines and deeds of your teacher, because you saw them before you with your own eyes and heard them with your own ears, and that it is not possible for any other to have anything similar by vision or apparition. But I shall show that this is false. He who hears anything with his own ears is not altogether fully assured of the truth of what is said; for his mind has to consider whether he is wrong or not, inasmuch as he (i.e. Christ) is a man as far as appearance goes. But apparition not merely presents an object to view, but inspires him who sees it with confidence, for it comes from God. Now first reply to this.'*

*Peter has a ready answer. 'The Prophet, because he is a prophet, having first given certain information with regard to what is said objectively by him, is believed with confidence; and being known beforehand to be a true prophet, and being examined and questioned as the disciple wishes, he replies. But he who trusts to apparition or vision and dream is insecure. For it is possible either that he (i.e. the one who reveals himself) may be an evil demon or a deceiving spirit, pretending in his speeches to be what he is not. But if anyone should wish to inquire of him who he is who has appeared, he can say of himself what he will. And thus, gleaming forth like a wicked one, and remaining as long as he cares to do, he is at length extinguished, not remaining with the questioner as long as he wished him to for the purpose of examination.'*

We can summarize the sense of the extract to make it clearer. The Pauline is saying, 'He who relies on what a man says cannot be sure he has received the truth, since the man may be right or wrong. But he who obtains his revelation by a vision knows that he is getting information from a superhuman source, from God Himself, and therefore the truth of what he is told is guaranteed.' The Petrine answers, that there is a difference when the man is known to be a true prophet, and has given evidence that he is. 'The man does not appear and disappear. He remains with the disciple to explain his words, and can be questioned indefinitely. But an apparition provides only a brief encounter. Before it can be questioned at length it has gone. Moreover, the apparition can falsely claim to be someone whom it is not, and the disciple has no opportunity to test whether it may not be a demon in disguise deliberately deceiving him.'

**We may bring our treatment of tile rival positions to an end here, though the evidences have by no means been exhausted. Our concern has been sufficiency to establish and illustrate beyond any doubt this fact:**

***Christianity as we know it must not be imagined to be identical with what Yeshua taught about himself and what his immediate Apostles proclaimed. Catholic Christianity is based on a radical deviation, which progressively by dubious ways and means was converted into an orthodoxy. Historical conditions, which we have depicted, favored the supremacy of a Church and its doctrines predominantly Gentile in outlook and composition. But the direct heirs of original Christianity did resist strenuously to the limited***

***measure of their capacity. The victory was not won without a prolonged struggle, and a running battle sustained for centuries. Just as the insignificant Jews dared once and again to match themselves against the might of the Roman Empire, so did the Jewish believers in Yeshua as the Messiah manfully contend with the overwhelming forces the Roman Church was able to unleash against them.***

***If you are the typical Christian you know from your experience and religious doctrines that you most likely have been taught and currently hold...that the Jewish followers of Jesus were again conquered by Gentile Rome...first militarily then theologically***

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# THE PROBLEM OF PAUL IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

**At the beginning of Christianity stand two figures: Yeshua and Paul. Yeshua is regarded by Christians as the founder of their religion, in that the events of his life comprise the foundation story of Christianity; but Paul is regarded as the great interpreter of Yeshua's mission, who explained, in a way that Yeshua himself never did, how Yeshua's life and death fitted into a cosmic scheme of salvation, stretching from the creation of Adam to the end of time.**

**Answer for yourself: How should we understand the relationship between Yeshua and Paul?**

**In this series of articles we shall be approaching this question not from the standpoint of faith, but from that of historians, who regard the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament as an important source of evidence requiring careful sifting and criticism, since their authors were propagating religious beliefs rather than conveying dispassionate historical information. We shall also be taking into account all relevant evidence from other sources, such as Josephus, the Talmud, the Church historians and the Gnostic writings.**

**Answer for yourself: What would Yeshua himself have thought of Paul?**

**We must remember that Yeshua never knew Paul; the two men never once met. The disciples who knew Yeshua best, such as Peter, James and John, have left few writings behind them explaining how Yeshua seemed to them or what they considered his mission to have been.**

**Answer for yourself: Did they agree with the interpretations disseminated by Paul in his fluent, articulate writings?**

**Answer for yourself: Or did they perhaps think that this newcomer to the scene, spinning complicated theories about the place of Yeshua in the scheme of things, was getting everything wrong? Impossible you say? Read on.**

**Paul claimed that his interpretations were not just his own invention, but had come to him by personal inspiration; he claimed that he had personal acquaintance with the resurrected Yeshua, even though he had never met him during his lifetime. Such acquaintance, he claimed, gained through visions was actually superior to acquaintance with Yeshua during his lifetime, when Yeshua was much more reticent about his purposes.**

**Answer for yourself: Who knew Yeshua best; the Apostles who lived side-by-side with him for 3 ½ years during his earthly ministry, or Paul who had a momentary vision of him on the Damascus road?**

**Answer for yourself: When religious doctrines are in conflict, who should we believer more: The Apostles and the Gospels, or Paul's epistles?**

**We know about Paul not only from his own letters but also from the book of Acts, which gives a full account of his life. Paul, in fact, is the hero of Acts, which was written by an admirer and follower of his, namely, Luke, who was also the author of the Gospel of that name. From Acts, it would appear that there was some friction between Paul and the leaders of the 'Jerusalem Church', the surviving companions of**

**Yeshua; but we are later asked to believe that this friction was resolved, and they all became the best of friends, with common aims and purposes. Yet a close examination of the Greek scriptures reveal that Paul did opposite of what was required of him by the Jerusalem Council and James in 50 C.E.. From certain of Paul's letters, particularly Galatians, it seems that the friction was more serious than in the picture given in Acts, which thus appears to be partly a propaganda exercise, intended to portray unity in the early Church. In actuality there was not unity between Paul and the Jerusalem Church.**

**Answer for yourself: The question recurs: what would Yeshua have thought of Paul, and what did the Apostles think of him?**

**We should remember that the New Testament, as we have it, is much more dominated by Paul than appears at first sight. As we read it, we come across the Four Gospels, of which Yeshua is the hero, and do not encounter Paul as a character until we embark on the post-Yeshua narrative of Acts. Then we finally come into contact with Paul himself, in his letters. But this impression is misleading, for the earliest writings in the New Testament are actually Paul's letters, which were written about AD 50-60, while the Gospels were not written until the period AD 70-110. This means that the theories of Paul were already before the writers of the Gospels and colored their interpretations of Yeshua's activities. Paul is, in a sense, present from the very first word of the New Testament. This is, of course, not the whole story, for the Gospels are based on traditions and even written sources which go back to a time before the impact of Paul, and these early traditions and sources are not entirely obliterated in the final version and give valuable indications of what the story was like before early Gentile Catholic Fathers [Paulinist editors] pulled it into final shape long after Paul's death. However, the dominant outlook and shaping perspective of the Gospels is that of Paul, for the simple reason that it was the Paulinist view of what Yeshua's sojourn on Earth had been about that was triumphant in the Church as it developed in history. Rival and more correct interpretations of the facts, which at one time had been orthodox and recognized as truthful to all, opposed to Paul's very individual views, now became heretical and were crowded out of the final version of the writings adopted by the Pauline Gentile Church as the inspired canon of the New Testament.**

**This explains the puzzling and ambiguous role given in the Gospels to the companions of Yeshua, the twelve disciples. They are shadowy figures, who are allowed little personality, except of a schematic kind. They are also portrayed as stupid; they never quite understand what Yeshua is up to. Their importance in the origins of Christianity is played down in a remarkable way. For example, we find immediately after Yeshua's death that the leader of the Jerusalem Church is Yeshua's brother James. Yet in the Gospels, this James does not appear at all as having anything to do with Yeshua's mission and story. Instead, he is given a brief mention as one of the brothers of Yeshua who allegedly *opposed* Yeshua during his lifetime and regarded him as mad. How it came about that a brother who had been hostile to Yeshua in his lifetime suddenly became the revered leader of the Church immediately after Yeshua's death is not explained, though one would have thought that some explanation was called for. Later Church legends, of course, filled the gap with stories of the miraculous conversion of James after the death of Yeshua and his development into a saint. But the most likely explanation is that the erasure of Yeshua's brother dames (and his other brothers) from any significant role in the Gospel story is part of the denigration of the early leaders who had been in close contact with Yeshua and regarded with great suspicion and dismay the Christological theories of the upstart Paul, flaunting his brand new visions in interpretation of the Yeshua whom he had never met in the flesh.**

**Answer for yourself: Who, then, was Paul?**

**Here we would seem to have a good deal of information; but on closer examination, it will turn out to be full of problems. It is to these issues that these articles are devoted. We have the information given by Paul about himself in his letters, which are far from impersonal and often take an autobiographical turn. Also we have the information given in Acts, in which Paul plays the chief role. But the information given by any person about himself always has to be treated with a certain reserve, since everyone has strong motives for putting himself in the best possible light. And the information given about Paul in Acts also requires close scrutiny, since' this work was written by someone committed to the Pauline cause.**

**Answer for yourself: Have we any other sources for Paul's biography?**

**As a matter of fact, we have, though they are scattered in various unexpected places, which it will be our task to explore: in a preserved extract from the otherwise lost writings of the Ebionites, a sect of great importance for our quest; in a disguised attack on Paul included in a text of orthodox Christian authority; and in an Arabic manuscript, in which a text of the early Jewish Christians, the opponents of Paul, has been preserved by an unlikely chain of circumstances.**

**Let us first survey the evidence found in the more obvious and well known sources. It appears from Acts that Paul was at first called 'Saul' and that his birthplace was Tarsus, a city in Asia Minor (Acts 9:11, and 21:39, and 22:3). Strangely enough, however, Paul himself, in his letters, never mentions that he came from Tarsus, even when he is at his most autobiographical Instead, he gives the following information about his origins: 'I am an Israelite myself, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin' (Romans 11:2); and '. . . circumcised on my eighth day, Israelite by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born and bred; in my attitude to the law, a Pharisee....' (Philippians 3:5). It seems that Paul was not anxious to impart to the recipients of his letters that he came from somewhere so remote as Tarsus from Jerusalem, Jerusalem being the center of Pharisaism. The impression he wished to give, of coming from an unimpeachable Pharisaic background, would have been much impaired by the admission that he in fact came from Tarsus, where there were few, if any, Pharisee teachers and a Pharisee training would have been hard to come by.**

**We encounter, then, right at the start of our enquiry into Paul's background, a very important question.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul really from a genuine Pharisaic family, as he says to his correspondents, or was this just something that he said to increase his status in their eyes?**

**The fact that this question is hardly ever asked shows how strong the influence of traditional religious attitudes still is in Pauline studies. Scholars feel that, however objective their enquiry is supposed to be, they must always preserve an attitude of deep reverence towards Paul, and never say anything to suggest that he may have bent the truth at times, though the evidence is strong enough in various parts of his life-story that he was not above deception when he felt it warranted by circumstances.**

**It should be noted that modern scholarship has shown that, at this time, the Pharisees were held in high repute throughout the Roman and Parthian empires as a dedicated group who upheld religious ideals in the face of tyranny, supported leniency and mercy in the application of laws, and championed the rights of the poor against the oppression of the rich. The undeserved reputation for hypocrisy which is attached to the name 'Pharisee' in medieval and our modern understanding of this bias by the anti-Semitic Gentile Church is due to the campaign against the Pharisees in the Gospels--a campaign dictated by politico-religious considerations at the time when the Gospels were given their final editing, about forty to eighty years after the death of Yeshua. Paul's desire to be thought of as a person of Pharisee upbringing should thus be understood in the light of the actual reputation of the Pharisees in Paul's lifetime; Paul was claiming a high honor, which would much enhance his status in the eyes of his correspondents.**

**Before looking further into Paul's claim to have come from a Pharisee background, let us continue our survey of what we are told about Paul's career in the more accessible sources. The young Saul, we are told, left Tarsus and came to the Land of Israel, where he studied in the Pharisee academy of Gamaliel (Acts as: 3). We know from other sources about Gamaliel, who is a highly respected figure in the rabbinical writings such as the Mishnah, and was given the title 'Rabban', as the leading sage of his day. That he was the leader of the whole Pharisee party is attested also by the New Testament itself, for he plays a prominent role in one scene in the book of Acts (chapter 5) a role that, as we shall see later, is hard to reconcile with the general picture of the Pharisees given in the Gospels.**

**Yet Paul himself, in his letters, never mentions that he was a pupil of Gamaliel, even when he is most concerned to stress his qualifications as a Pharisee.**

**Answer for yourself: What would motivate Paul to omit such a prestigious reference to bolster himself except for the fact that many who were alive at that time knew different?**

**Answer for yourself: Here again, then, the question has to be put: was Paul ever really a pupil of Gamaliel or was this claim made by Luke as an embellishment to his narrative?**

***As we shall see later, there are certain considerations which make it most unlikely, quite apart from Paul's significant omission to say anything about the matter, that Paul was ever a pupil of Gamaliel's.***

**We are also told of the young Saul that he was implicated, to some extent, in the death of the martyr Stephen. The people who gave false evidence against Stephen, we are told, and who also took the leading part in the stoning of their innocent victim, 'laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul'. The death of Stephen is described, and it is added, 'And Saul was among those who approved of his murder' (Acts 81).**

**Answer for yourself: How much truth is there in this detail?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it to be regarded as historical fact or as dramatic embellishment, emphasizing the contrast between Paul before and after conversion?**

**The death of Stephen is itself an episode that requires searching analysis, since it is full of problems and contradictions. Until we have a better idea of why and by whom Stephen was killed and what were the views for which he died, we can only note the alleged implication of Saul in the matter as a subject for further investigation. For the moment, we also note that the alleged implication of Saul heightens the impression that adherence to Pharisaism would mean violent hostility to the followers of Yeshua, which you will soon see is not the facts nor is it the case.**

**The next thing we are told about Saul in Acts is that he was harrying the Church; he entered house after house, seizing men and women, and sending them to prison' (Acts 8: 3). We are not told at this point by what authority or on whose orders he was carrying out this persecution. It was clearly not a matter of merely individual action on his part, for sending people to prison can only be done by some kind official. Saul must have been acting on behalf of some authority, an who this authority was can be gleaned from later incidents in which Saul was acting on behalf of the High Priest. Anyone with knowledge the religious and political scene at this time in Judaea feels the presence of an important problem here: the High Priest was not a Pharisee, but Sadducee, and the Sadducees were bitterly opposed to the Pharisees and avoided each other.**

**Answer for yourself: How is it that Saul, allegedly an enthusiastic Pharisee ('a Pharisee the Pharisees'), is acting hand in glove with the High Priest?**

***The picture we are given in our New Testament sources of Saul, in the days before his conversion to Yeshua, is contradictory and suspect.***

**The next we hear of Saul (chapter 9) is that he 'was still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest and applied for letters to the synagogues at Damascus authorizing him to arrest anyone he found, men or women, who followed the new way, and bring them to Jerusalem.**

**Answer for yourself: If Saul had his hands so full in 'harrying the church' in Judaea, why did he suddenly have the idea of going off to Damascus to harry the Church there?**

**Answer for yourself: What was the special urgency of a visit to Damascus?**

**Answer for yourself: Further, what kind of jurisdiction did the Jewish High Priest have over the non-Jewish**

**city of Damascus that would enable him to authorize arrests and extraditions in that city let alone another country?**

**There is something very puzzling about the way in which Saul relation to the High Priest is described: as if he is a private citizen who wishes to make citizen's arrests according to some plan of his own, and approaches the High Priest for the requisite authority. Surely there must have been some much more definite official connection between the High Priest and Saul, not merely that the High Priest was called upon to underwrite Saul's project. It seems more likely that the plan was the High Priest's and not Saul's, and that Saul was acting as agent or emissary of the High Priest. The whole incident needs to be considered in the light of probabilities and current conditions.**

**The book of Acts then continues with the account of Saul conversion on the road to Damascus through a vision of Yeshua and the succeeding events of his life as a follower of Yeshua. The pre-Christian period of Saul's life, however, does receive further mention later in the book of Acts, both in chapter 22 and chapter 26, where some interesting details are added, and also some further puzzles.**

**In chapter 22, Saul (now called Paul), is shown giving his own account of his early life in a speech to the people after the Roman commandant had questioned him. Paul speaks as follows:**

**I am a true-born Jew, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia. I was brought up in this city, and as a pupil of Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in every point of our ancestral law. I have always been ardent in God's service, as you all are today. And so I began to persecute this movement to the death, arresting its followers, men and women alike, and putting them in chains. For this I have as witnesses the High Priest and the whole Council of Elders. I was given letters from them to our fellow-Jews at Damascus, and had started our to bring the Christians there to Jerusalem as prisoners for punishment; and this is what happened....**

**Paul then goes on to describe his vision of Yeshua on the road to Damascus. Previously he had described himself as 'a Jew, a Tarsian from Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city'.**

**It is from this passage that we learn of Paul's native city, Tarsus, and of his alleged studies under Gamaliel. Note that he says that, though born in Tarsus, he was 'brought up in this city' (i.e. Jerusalem) which suggests that he spent his childhood in Jerusalem.**

**Answer for yourself: Does this mean that his parents moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem?**

**Answer for yourself: Or that the child was sent to Jerusalem on his own, which seems unlikely?**

**If Paul spent only a few childhood years in Tarsus, he would hardly describe himself proudly as 'a citizen of no mean city' (Tarsus). Jews who had spent most of their lives in Jerusalem would be much more prone to describe themselves as citizens of Jerusalem. The likelihood is that Paul moved to Jerusalem when he was already a grown man, and he left his parents behind in Tarsus, which seems all the more probable in that they receive no mention in any account of Paul's experiences in Jerusalem. As for Paul's alleged period of studies under Gamaliel, this would have had to be in adulthood, for Gamaliel was a teacher of advanced studies, not a teacher of children. He would accept as a pupil only someone well grounded and regarded as suitable for the rabbinate.**

**Answer for yourself: The question, then, is: "where and how Paul received this thorough grounding, if at all"?**

***As will be pointed out in more detail later, there are strong reasons to think that Paul never was a pupil of Gamaliel.***

**An important question that also arises in this chapter of Acts is that of Paul's Roman citizenship. This is mentioned first in chapter 16. Paul claims to have been born a Roman citizen, which would mean that his father was a Roman citizen. There are many problems to be discussed in this connection, and some of these questions**

**impinge on Paul's claim to have had a Pharisaic background.**

**A further account of Paul's pre-Christian life is found in chapter 26 of Acts, in a speech addressed by Paul to King Agrippa. Paul says:**

**My life from my youth up, the life I led from the beginning among my people and in Jerusalem, is familiar to all Jews. Indeed they have known me long enough and could testify, if they only would, that I belonged to the strictest group in our religion: I lived as a Pharisee. And it is for a hope kindled by God's promise to our forefathers that I stand in the dock today. Our twelve tribes hope to see the fulfillment of that promise.... I myself once thought it my duty to work actively against the name of Yeshua of Nazareth; and I did so in Jerusalem. It was I who imprisoned many of God's people by authority obtained from the chief priests; and when they were condemned to death, my vote was cast against them. In all the synagogues I tried by repeated punishment to make them renounce their faith; indeed my fury rose to such a pitch that I extended my persecution to foreign cities. On one such occasion I was travelling to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests....**

**Again the account continues with the vision on the road to Damascus. This speech, of course, cannot be regarded as the authentic words addressed by Paul to King Agrippa, but rather as a rhetorical speech composed by Luke, the author of Acts, in the style of ancient historians. Thus the claim made in the speech that Paul's career as a Pharisee of high standing was known to 'all Jews' cannot be taken at face value. It is interesting that Paul is represented as saying that he 'cast his vote' against the followers of Yeshua, thus helping to condemn them to death. This can only refer to the voting of the Sanhedrin or Council of Elders, which was convened to try capital cases; so what Luke is claiming here for his hero Paul is that he was at one time a member of the Sanhedrin. This is highly unlikely, for Paul would surely have made this claim in his letters, when writing about his credentials as a Pharisee, if it had been true. There is, however, some confusion both in this account and in the accounts quoted above about whether the Sanhedrin, as well as the High Priest or 'chief priests', was involved in the persecution of the followers of Yeshua. Sometimes the High Priest alone is mentioned, sometimes the Sanhedrin is coupled with him, as if the two are inseparable. But we see on two occasions cited in Acts that the High Priest was outvoted by the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin; on both occasions, the Pharisees were *opposing* an attempt to persecute the followers of Yeshua; so the representation of High Priest and Sanhedrin as having identical aims is one of the suspect features of these accounts. It will be seen from the above collation of passages in the book of Acts concerning Paul's background and early life, together with Paul's own references to his background in his letters, that the same strong picture emerges: that Paul was at first a highly trained Pharisee rabbi, learned in all the intricacies of the rabbinical commentaries on scripture and legal traditions (afterwards collected in the rabbinical compilations, the Talmud and Midrash). As a Pharisee, Paul was strongly opposed to the new sect which followed Yeshua and which believed that he had been resurrected after his crucifixion. So opposed was Paul to this sect that he took violent action against it, dragging its adherents to prison. Though this strong picture has emerged, some doubts have also arisen, which, so far, have only been lightly sketched in: how is it, for example, that Paul claims to have voted against Christians on trial for their lives before the Sanhedrin, when in fact, in the graphically described trial of Peter before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5), the Pharisees, led by Gamaliel, voted for the *release* of Peter?**

**Answer for yourself: What kind of Pharisee was Paul, if he took an attitude towards the early Christians which, on the evidence of the same book of Acts, was untypical of the Pharisees?**

**Answer for yourself: And how is it that this book of Acts is so inconsistent within itself that it describes Paul as violently opposed to Christianity *because* of his deep attachment to Pharisaism, and yet also describes the Pharisees as being friendly towards the early Christians, standing up for them and saving their lives?**

**It has been pointed out by many scholars that the book of Acts, on the whole, contains a surprising amount of evidence favorable to the Pharisees, showing them to have been tolerant and merciful. Some scholars have even argued that the book of Acts is a pro-Pharisee work; but this can hardly be maintained. For, outweighing all the evidence favorable to the Pharisees is the material relating to Paul, which is, in all its aspects, unfavorable to the Pharisees; not only is Paul himself portrayed as being a virulent persecutor *when he was a Pharisee*, but Paul**

**declares that he himself was punished by flogging five times by the 'Jews' (usually taken to mean the Pharisees). So no one really comes away from reading Acts with any good impression of the Pharisees, but rather with the negative impressions derived from the Gospels reinforced.**

**Answer for yourself: Why, therefore, is Paul always so concerned to stress that he came from a Pharisee background when his connection with the High Priest and his police reveal a Sadducee background?**

**A great many motives can be discerned, but there is one that needs to be singled out here: the desire to stress the alleged continuity between Judaism and Pauline Christianity. Paul wishes to say that whereas, when he was a Pharisee, he mistakenly regarded the early Christians as heretics who had departed from true Judaism, after his conversion he took the opposite view, that Christianity was the true Judaism. All his training as a Pharisee, he wishes to say - all his study of scripture and tradition really leads to the acceptance of Yeshua as the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament. So when Paul declares his Pharisee past, he is not merely proclaiming his own sins- 'See how I have changed, from being Pharisee persecutor to being a devoted follower of Yeshua!' - he is also proclaiming his credentials - 'If someone as learned as I can believe that Yeshua was the fulfillment of the Torah, who is there fearless enough to disagree?'**

**On the face of it, Paul's doctrine of Yeshua is a daring departure from Judaism and the faith handed down since Adam. Paul was advocating a doctrine that seemed to have far more in common with pagan myths than with Judaism: that Yeshua was divine-human person who had descended to Earth from the heave and experienced death for the express purpose of saving mankind. The very fact that the Jews found this doctrine new and shocking shows that it plays no role in the Jewish scripture, at least not in any way easily discernible. Yet Paul was not content to say that his doctrine was new; on the contrary, he wished to say that every line of the Jewish scripts was a foreshadowing of the Yeshua-event as he understood it, and that those who understood the scripture in any other way were failing comprehension of what Judaism had always been about. So his insistence on his Pharisaic upbringing was part of his insistence on continuity.**

**There were those who accepted Paul's doctrine, but did regard it a. radical new departure, with nothing in the Jewish scriptures fore-shadowing it. The best known figure of this kind was Marcion, who lived about a hundred years after Paul, and regarded Paul as his chief inspiration. Yet Marcion refused to see anything Jewish in Paul's doctrine, but regarded it as a new revelation. He regarded the Jewish scriptures as the work of the Devil and he excluded the Old Testament from his version of the Bible.**

**Paul himself rejected this view. Though he regarded much of the Old Testament as obsolete, superseded by the advent of Yeshua, he still regarded it as the Word of God, prophesying the new Christian Church and giving it authority. So his picture of himself as a Pharisee symbolizes the continuity between the old dispensation and the new figure who comprised in his own person the turning-point at which Judaism was transformed into Christianity.**

**Throughout the Christian centuries, there have been Christian scholars who have seen Paul's claim to a Pharisee background in this light. In the medieval Disputations convened by Christians to convert Jews, arguments were put forward purporting to show that not only the Jewish scriptures but even the rabbinical writings, the Talmud and the Midrash, supported the claims of Christianity that Yeshua was the Messiah, that he was divine and that he had to suffer death for mankind. Though Paul was not often mentioned in these Disputations, the project was one of which he would have approved. In modern times, scholars have labored to argue that Paul's doctrines about the Messiah and divine suffering are continuous with Judaism as it appears in the Bible, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and in the rabbinical writings (the best-known effort of this nature is Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, by W. D. Davies).**

**So Paul's claim to expert Pharisee learning is relevant to a very important and central issue - whether Christianity, in the form given to it by Paul, is really continuous with Judaism or whether it is a new doctrine, having no roots in Judaism, but deriving, in so far as it has an historical background, from pagan myths of dying and resurrected gods and Gnostic myths of heaven-descended redeemers.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul truly stand in the Jewish tradition, or was he a person of basically Hellenistic religious type, but seeking to give a coloring of Judaism to a salvation cult that was really opposed to everything that Judaism stood for? As you learn more you can be the judge. Shalom.**

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# DID PAUL BETRAY JESUS AND HIS MESSAGE?

**I know that often what I show you in these articles is at the very least extremely controversial. After all, it proposes that St. Paul, who founded the Christian faith as it mainly practiced today, betrayed the message and meaning of Yeshua.**

**I suppose that most often I hear from various readers of my articles that say: “Well, Craig, if you are right, then why isn't there more people who are teaching the correction to the Body of Messiah that you are? They ask "why are not more teaching things like you which are in opposition to Paul’s views in the Bible"?**

**Answer for yourself: How many books on this same subject have your read in the last six months?**

**Answer for yourself: How many long hours at the library and long hours into the night have you stayed up and diligently looked up the words in your English Bible in the Greek references and Hebrew references and compare their original meanings with what you have been told in your churches when only the English translation is read and not studied?**

**Answer for yourself: How adept are you from your studies that you can isolate and recognize when reading the New Testament that Jewish texts and phrases from the Old Testament are lifted out of their places in the Hebrew Scriptures and given meanings in the New Testament which, at best, are forced?**

**Answer for yourself: How adept are you from your studies that you can isolate and recognize when reading the New Testament that the literary formula "What was said through the prophet was thus fulfilled", which precedes many of the prophetic verses in the New Testament, has little validity and connection to the original context and meaning of the Old Testament writer and is only used in the New Testament to lead the reader to suppose that the Tanakh anticipated and predicted the events recorded in the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: How adept are you from your studies that you can isolate and recognize when reading the New Testament that many techniques employed by the New Testament include the using of the Hebrew Old Testament to fulfill an agenda and does so by citing verses out of context, mistranslation of verses, and misquotation of Old Testament texts on purpose?**

**Answer for yourself: How adept are you from your studies that you can isolate and recognize when reading the New Testament that many techniques employed by the New Testament include the using of a figurative or poetic phrase from the Old Testament which is made into a straightforward statement in the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: How adept are you from your studies that you can isolate and recognize when reading the New Testament that sometimes sayings of different writers, living in different places, and in different centuries are run together and made to bring a totally different meaning than what the original Old Testament author intended?**

**Answer for yourself: How many of you can truthfully say that your only exposure to the Bible is Sunday mornings in your church, and yet you think you know enough to determine if what I am challenging you with is wrong or right? You must investigate the matter with us to see if you truly be in the faith of Christ.**

**There is an old saying, "history is written by the victors." In this case, Paul had overcome the opposition and established a church of his making. It is natural that writings that appear to go against the established Gentile church of the fourth century would not be accepted into the Canon of the Bible in 380 A.D.. Evidently there was significant opposition to the inclusion of the letters of James and Peter (which we have seen in prior articles to be more closely in line with the thoughts of Christ than with the thoughts of Paul). Most likely some of the leaders of the church recognized the anti-Paul connotations to which I have alluded to in my other articles and rejected such literature from being in the Bible, thus we are robbed of such material unless we dig to see if information like that exists. It is important to remember that most all of the New Testament is either written by Paul or written after his teaching. Even the four Gospels, in spite of their physical position ahead of Paul's letters, were written after Paul's teaching and highly influenced by it. In fact Paul states that he is with Luke (author *of* the Third Gospel and Acts) and is sending for Mark (Second Gospel). With this in mind, it is reasonable to assume that those items included in the Bible that differed from the teachings of Paul were included merely because they were so well known by the Christians at that time. It would have been impossible to exclude them without raising too many questions.**

**Answer for yourself: Yet why do we find instances where Yeshua's words often support the position taken by Paul?**

**For example, you might suggest that Yeshua seems to be supporting Paul's view on salvation (which is that faith in Christ's identity and mission, and not faith that responds in obedience and ethical and moral deeds leads one to heaven). You can easily jump to that conclusion when the author of Luke states in 12:8: "I assure you that whoever declares publicly that he belongs to me, the Son of Man will do the same for him before the angles of God."**

## PAUL'S HIDDEN INFLUENCE IN THE GOSPELS AND WHAT THEY TEACH

**Once again, we must remember that one passage does not make a doctrine and it is necessary to remember that the Gospels were written by men who had been influenced by Paul. Luke was actually a travel companion of Paul's. Understanding that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and doing religious doctrinal comparisons from the faith of the Jews all the way back from Genesis to Malachi will lead you to see without a doubt that the Gospels [which related information passed down by word of mouth for nearly fifty years], contain a mixture of accurate remembrances of Yeshua's words and deeds, as well as stories whit mix in the teachings of Paul.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you well-versed in Bible study that you can find examples of what I just said in the Bible you carry to church? [are you reading my articles, cause if you are you are seeing them for yourself].**

**Answer for yourself: Do you realize the implications when shown that Paul contradicts Yeshua in some of his teachings?**

**This perhaps explains the many contradictory statements and actions that are attributed to Yeshua. In addition to the above mentioned discrepancy about the teachings of Yeshua and Paul on salvation, I invite you to take a look at some other contradictions that are difficult to explain which most likely you have read over your whole life and not noticed?**

### PEACE

**Happy are those who work for Peace; God will call them his children! (Matthew 5:9)**

**"Put your sword back In Its place," Yeshua said to him. "All who take the sword will die by the sword." (Matthew 26:52)**

**Compare these quotes with the following:**

**Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No, I did not come to bring peace but a sword. (Matthew 10:34)**

**Answer for yourself: Do we dare say that Yeshua did not know what he was talking about, or has someone's ideas been attributed to the teachings of Yeshua by mistake?**

## FAMILY

**And Yeshua continued, 'you have a clever way of rejecting God's law in order to uphold your own teaching. For Moses commanded, 'respect your father and your mother,' and, 'whosoever curses his father and mother Is to be put to death.' But you teach that if a person has something he could use to help his father or mother, but says, 'This belongs to God,' he is excused from helping his father or mother. In this way the teaching you pass on to others cancels out the word of God." (Mark 7:9-13)**

**Compare this pro-family view with the following:**

**I come to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; a man's worst enemies will be members of his own family. (Matthew 10:35 36)**

**There are many more instances, and I urge you to return to the Gospels and look for other discrepancies. They are much easier to understand when a person realizes that a mixture of the views of Yeshua (a loving God) and the views of Paul (a vengeful, terrible God of the Old Testament) are perhaps responsible for the dilemma. No wonder that Marcion included only Paul's writing in his first collection of writings in 180 A.D. since they both advocated a harsh-concept of God.**

# WHY BELIEVE ME ANYWAY?

**Often those who read my articles want to take issue with the facts I present. They often ask me why they should believe what I showed them and why they should take my word about religious matters? I frankly tell them that they shouldn't! That is why I included so many quotes from the Bible. I have merely presented the idea. I hope that you will take it upon yourself to investigate the evidence and decide for yourself if what I have proposed is correct or not.**

# MOST CHRISTIAN CHURCHES FOLLOW PAUL RATHER THAN JESUS

**In my opinion, most Christians follow Paul instead of the Yeshua and too few Christians are educated enough to subconsciously edit the Bible in their own minds and have chosen to remember only those portions that present Yeshua and his teachings about a loving God and reject teachings of others that contradict Yeshua and his faith.. Paul's influence is most evident in the more fundamentals churches and among many TV evangelists.**

# WHY PAUL SUCCEEDED MORE THAN PETER

**Paul presented a version of Christianity that was much easier to follow than the more accurate version presented by St. Peter.**

**Although Paul speaks very harshly and sets some very strict guidelines concerning "sin,. he also establishes a system where a believer is allowed to sin with a clear conscience, as long as he or she follows some fairly simple rituals (Confession and acceptance of Christ as a Personal Lord and**

**Savior" are two examples of these expiating actions).**

**Yeshua asked that you live a good life; St. Paul asked that you give lip service to living a good life. Yeshua demanded more than most people were willing to give, so most opted to follow the message of Paul and to feel contented with their “Christians are not perfect, just forgiven" attitudes.**

# WHAT YOU SHOULD DO HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD WHAT I HAVE WRITTEN

**The most important thing to do is to re-read the Bible in the light of what has been pointed out in these articles and develop a correct view of Yeshua's message. Study Judaism, the religion of Yeshua and then compare it with the teachings in the New Testament to see where they agree and where they conflict. Then buy a Jewish Bible, a Tanakh, and then read it and compare the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament quotes and see for yourself the hundreds of misquotations, mistranslations, and passages taken out of context in the New Testament. Then you will come to realize that you have followed the wrong religion if you are a Christian. That is "ok", because if you are reading this then there is still room to repent and change. Then, find assemblies like Bet Emet that preach the true word of Yeshua and try to help spread the real "good news." Model and teach the "truth" to your Christian friends and provoke them to study so they can see exactly what you have. Continue until we all come to the unity of "the" Faith of Yeshua. Shalom.**

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# WHEN THE TEACHINGS OF PAUL CONFLICT WITH JESUS' TEACHINGS...WHO ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

**Whether or not one believes in the popular theologies surrounding the divinity of Christ, it is obvious that he was a very advanced thinker for his time. He presented a philosophy of love, kindness and forgiveness, which was quite revolutionary for this point in history. He introduced the picture of a loving God (a "Heavenly Father"), a picture that is quite a different from the vengeful wrathful God that is found in the Old Testament:**

***Moses saw that Aaron had let the people get out of control and make fools of themselves in front of their enemies. So he stood at the gate of the camp and shouted, "Everyone who is on the Lord's side come over here!" So all the Levites gathered around him, and he said to them, "The Lord God of Israel commands every one of you to put on your sword and go through the camp from this gate to the other and kill your brothers, your friends, and your neighbors." The Levites obeyed, and killed about three thousand men that day. Moses said to the Levites, "Today you have consecrated yourselves as priests in the service of the Lord by killing your sons and brothers, so the Lord has given you his blessing." (Exodus 32:25-29)***

**Or this:**

***Elisha left Jerico to go to Bethel, and on the way some boys came out of a town and made fun of him. "Get out of here, baldy!" they shouted. Elisha turned around, glared at them, and cursed them In the name of the Lord. Then two she-bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys to pieces. (2 Kings 2:23-24)***

**Praising people for killing their sons and brothers, or having forty-two boys killed horribly because of bad manners, is hardly what one would expect from a "Heavenly Father." However, this was the predominant view of God that was presented prior to the coming of Yeshua. Yeshua proposed a different outlook and advocated different actions than what the people were accustomed to at that time. To determine that Paul corrupted the Christian faith from within, it is necessary to consider whether Paul continued the changes that Yeshua had begun or if, in fact, he worked diligently to undo the work of Yeshua and returned to a view more in keeping with the one that is presented in the Old Testament.**

**I realize that such a thought seems preposterous to the reader already, but let me say that I am not a liar as Paul will be shown to be.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you the courage to read this article with an open mind?**

**Answer for yourself: Have you the courage to confront the facts concerning what you have been spoon-fed since childhood that is supposed to be the faith that Jesus desires you have?**

**If you do, then you will be greatly rewards for in this article, as others from Bet Emet Ministries, we will reveal to you have Paul changed the religion of Yeshua and transformed in from one of obedience to the commandments of God seen as fruit of our faith, into one concerned mainly with the cosmic identity of Christ. Either Paul shifted the influence of the message of Yeshua or else he didn't.**

**Answer for yourself: Dare you dare look?**

**Let us examine doctrines and teachings where Yeshua is corrected by Paul:**

# LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

**This is what Yeshua had to say on this subject:**

**You have heard it said, "Love your friends, hate your enemies." But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father In heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on those who do good and to those who do evil. Why should God reward you if you love only the people who love you? Even the tax collectors do that! And if you speak only to your friends, have you done any" thing out of the ordinary? Even the pagans do that! You must be perfect—just as your Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:43-48).**

**This was a revolutionary idea at that point in history, and it would be amazing if people would live up to it today!**

**Take a look at what Paul does with this same idea:**

**If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink*; FOR BY SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS UPON HIS HEAD* (Romans 12:20)**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul respond to his enemies out of love as Yeshua instructs and does it seem that he desires to be perfect before God?**

**In this same chapter, Paul also states:**

**Let love be genuine. (Romans 12:9)**

**No matter what you say, this is not genuine love, but rather deceit. Paul advocates what he calls love in order to defeat one's enemies. He reaches back into the Old Testament (Proverbs) and while making it sound as if he is preaching the same love of enemies that was taught by Yeshua, he in fact undoes Yeshua's work and returns us to the thoughts of the pre-Yeshua era.**

# REVENGE

**Along with love for one's enemies, Yeshua talks about revenge:**

**You have heard that It was said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too. (Matthew 5:38-39)**

**Here, Yeshua takes a quote from the Old Testament [Ex. 21:42, Lev. 24:20, Deut. 19:21], and directly**

**contradicts what the people had been hearing in error.**

**Now consider if Paul is faithful to this idea:**

**Never take revenge, my friends, *BUT INSTEAD LET GOD'S ANGER DO IT*. For the scripture says: "I will take revenge, I will pay back, says the Lord." (Romans 12:19)**

**Once again, Paul is using words similar to Yeshua's but in fact is leaping over Yeshua and back into the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 32:35). While Yeshua advises people to rise above thoughts of revenge, Paul merely tells them that revenge will be theirs but that God will be the instrument of that revenge rather than themselves. And so, another of the ways of dealing with difficult people as advocated by Yeshua is cleverly undone by Paul.**

# CONCERNING WOMEN

**Yeshua does not say very much concerning the status of women. There is, however, reference to the fact that women were helpful to Yeshua and his disciples:**

**Some women were there, looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, and Salome. *THEY HAD FOLLOWED JESUS WHILE HE WAS IN GALILEE AND HAD HELPED HIM*. (Mark 15:40ff.)**

**There is also evidence that Yeshua considered it important for women to be interested directly in spiritual matters, as opposed to domestic chores (women's work.):**

**As Yeshua and his disciples went on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him In her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and listened to his teaching. Martha was upset over all the work she had to do, so she came and said, “Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" The Lord answered her, Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things, but Just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:38-42)**

**Paul also seems to indicate that Yeshua was in favor of equality between the sexes:**

**It is through faith that all of you are God's sons in union with Christ Yeshua. You were baptized into union with Christ, and now you are clothed, so to speak, with the life of Christ himself. *SO THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE* between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, *BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN;* you are all one in union with Christ (Galatians 3:26-28).**

**This sounds very good.**

**However, once again, after making a general statement that would seem to align him with the wishes of Yeshua. Paul deviates markedly when he gets down to the specifics:**

**As In all the churches of God's people, the women should keep quiet in the meetings. They are not allowed to speak; they must not be In charge. *IF THEY WANT TO FIND OUT ABOUT SOMETHING, THEY SHOULD ASK THEIR HUSBANDS AT HOME.* It is a disgraceful thing for a woman to speak in a church meeting (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).**

**Answer for yourself: Does this sound like there is no difference between men and women?**

# SALVATION

**Take a look first at what Paul has to say about salvation:**

**But now God's way of putting people right with himself has been revealed. It has nothing to do with law, *even though* the Law of Moses and the prophets gave their witness to it. God puts people right with Him through their faith in Yeshua Christ. God does this to all who believe In Christ, because there is no difference at all: everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. But by the tree gift of God's grace all are put right with him through Christ Yeshua, who sets them free (Romans 3:21-24).**

***So, Paul is saying that since no one lives up to the ideals of God, people will be judged worthy as long as they merely have faith in Yeshua. Other factors, such as deeds and obedience to God's law, are not taken into consideration.***

**Now compare this idea to what Yeshua has to say about the subject:**

***NOT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ME "LORD, LORD" WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do. (Matthew 7:21)***

**And later:**

***For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then HE WILL REWARD EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. (Matthew 16:27)***

**It is also interesting to note what James (the brother of Yeshua) had to say about this subject. (It is reasonable to assume that he would be quite familiar with Yeshua's views.)**

***My brothers, what good is it for someone to say that he has faith if his actions do not prove it? (James 2:14)***

***You see, then, that it is by his actions that a person is put right with God, and not by his faith alone. (James 2:24)***

**Answer for yourself: You must put your faith as a Christian in someone or something; who are you going to believe…James, Yeshua' hand-picked Pastor of the church Yeshua said he was to build, and Yeshua who agree on the issue of salvation or Paul who contradicts both them and the other Apostolic writings in the New Testament?**

**One more passage just for good measure:**

***So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without actions is dead. (James 2:26)***

# PAUL'S CHARACTER

**What a difference there is in the words of those who knew Christ personally (Peter and James) and**

the words of Paul. **The tone of Peter's letters is exemplified in the following quote: I, who am an elder myself, appeal to the church elders among you. I am a witness of Christ's sufferings, and I will share in the glory that will be revealed. I appeal to you to be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and to take care of it willingly, as God wants you to, and not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been put in your care, but be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the glorious crown which will never lose Its brightness. In the same way you younger men must submit yourselves to the older men. And all of you must put on the apron of humility, to serve one another; for the scripture says, "God resists the proud, but shows favor to the humble." Humble yourselves, then, under God's mighty hand, so that he will lift you up In his own good time. Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:1-7)**

**You can sense here the loving concern at selflessness that one would expect from a true follower of Yeshua.**

**Compare this with some typical quotes from Paul:**

***I beg you not to force me to be harsh when I come; for I am sure I can deal harshly with those who say that we act from worldly motives. (2 Corinthians 10:2)***

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever wondered what cause the Corinthian church had to even say that Paul acted from worldly motives (where there is smoke there is fire)?**

**And after you have proved complete loyalty, we will be ready to punish any act of disloyalty. (2 Corinthians 10:6)**

**Answer for yourself: Where is Yeshua's message of love in this response of Paul?**

**For you gladly tolerate anyone who comes to you and preaches a different Yeshua, not the one we preached; and you accept a spirit and a gospel completely different from the Spirit and the gospel you received from us! I do not think that I am the least bit inferior to those very special so-called apostles" of yours! (2 Corinthians 11:4-5)**

**The difference in tone is undeniable. One can only wonder what changes might have occurred had the teachings of Peter and James been accepted as the foundation of the Christian faith, rather than the teachings of Paul.**

# GOVERNMENT

**Everyone must obey state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. Whoever opposes the existing authority opposes what God has ordered; and anyone who does so will bring Judgment on himself. For rulers are not to be feared by those who do good, but by those who do evil. Would you like to be unafraid of the man In authority? Then do what is good, and he will praise you, because he Is God's servant and carries out God's punishment on those who do evil. For this reason you must obey the authorities—not just because of God's punishment, but also as a matter of conscience (Romans 13:1-5).**

**This certainly seems to be ignoring the separation suggested by Yeshua:**

***So Yeshua said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor and pay to God what belongs to God." (Luke 20:25)***

**It is also interesting to note that according to Paul's reasoning, Hitler, and Stalin were given their**

power through the will of God and deserved the respect of their people.

**One more bit of evidence from Revelation should be pointed out here. When describing the second beast (Paul), it says: It had two horns like a lamb's horns, and it spoke like a dragon. (Revelation 13:11)**

**In other words, while giving the impression of being Christ-like (the Lamb), his words were those of the devil (the dragon).**

# EVIDENCE THAT SOME EARLY CHRISTIANS OPPOSED PAUL

Although there is no direct and open opposition to Paul in the Bible because such accounts have previously been edited out by the Gentile Church, it is inferred by the way Paul repeatedly defends himself against unnamed opponents. This is a very strong witness of the rejection of Paul and his Gospel by the Jerusalem Church. Listed below are a few examples:

- ***Even if others do not accept me as an apostle, surely you do! (1 Corinthians 9:2)***
- ***I can deal harshly with those who say that we act from worldly motives (2 Corinthians 10:2)***
- ***For you gladly tolerate anyone who comes to you and preach a different Yeshua, not the one we preached. (2 Corinthians 11:4)***
- ***I do not think that I am the least bit Inferior to those very special called "apostles" of yours (2 Corinthians 11:5)***
- ***I will go on doing what I am doing now, in order to keep those other "apostles" from having any reason for boasting and saying that they work in the same way that we do (2 Corinthians 11:12)***
- ***I am surprised at you! In no time at all you are deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ, and are accepting another gospel (Galatians 1:6)***
- ***I want you to stay In Ephesus, just as I urged you when I was on my way to Macedonia. Some people there are teaching false doctrines, and you must order them to stop. (1 Timothy 1:3)***

As the above quotes indicate, there were many within the followers of Yeshua who opposed Paul.

# MANY OF PAUL' FOLLOWERS LATER DESERT HIM

**Do your best to come to me soon. Demas fell in love with this present world and has deserted me, going off to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke Is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he can help me in the work. I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring my coat that I left en Troas with Carpus; bring the books too, and especially the ones made of parchment. Alexander the metalworker did me great harm; the Lord will reward him according to what he has done. Be on your guard against him yourself, because he was violently opposed to our message.** ***NO ONE STOOD BY ME THE LAST TIME I DEFENDED MYSELF; ALL DESERTED ME. (*****2 Timothy 4:9-16)**

**In Paul's own words, there is sufficient evidence that many people took exception to his version of Christianity. This occurred more and more as men from James continually pursued Paul and un-did what he was teaching. I challenge you to read the New Testament and follow these "blood hounds" on the sent of Paul. The only problem is that the New Testament calls these men by a negative term today…."Judaizers". Because the original Apostles understood that the Covenant was not null and void and that the Law of God was still in effect in their day after the cross of Yeshua gives me no right to call them by the very negative term "Judaizers" as do the writers of the New Testament. This is again one way we are deceived when reading the New Testament. If**

**you want to lump all the Apostles including James, Peter, and John and the boys under the mantle of "Judaizers" that is your prerogative. As for me I will continually strive to understand the dynamics involved in the censuring of Paul by the Jerusalem church as recorded in the New Testament. No wonder his apostleship and authority was questioned by James and the Jerusalem Church.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you to believe me because I write these articles?**

**No, but you should go back to the Bible and read the New Testament with these thoughts in mind. Then draw your own conclusions. Read first just the words of Yeshua in the four Gospels plus the letters of Peter (especially 1 Peter) and James. After reading these scriptures, imagine a Christian faith built upon this foundation and compare it with what resulted from the works of Paul!**

# CONCLUSION

**This, as well as other articles of Bet Emet Ministries, have touched on some of the areas where it is apparent that Paul twisted the meanings and, in fact, undid many of the teachings of Yeshua. As you review the Bible, look for other evidences of Paul's betrayal of Yeshua's work. Remember…study to show yourself approved… not having to stand ashamed before God in the resurrection because you accepted "another Gospel" by believing Paul over James and Yeshua. Shalom.**

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# PAUL-ODD MAN OUT AT THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL OF ACTS 15

Paul figures so prominently in the New Testament and his writings occupy so much of it that he has often been described as the real founder of Christianity. There is considerable justification for this view, for the Christian Faith as we know it would not have existed if it had not been for his contribution to its development.

**The Christian movement was in its infancy when this powerful personality dramatically became one of its adherents, a circumstance which was as unexpected as it was disturbing to the initial body of believers. Not only had he been persecuting them unmercifully as an agent of the hostile hierarchy which had condemned the Messiah but he was of such a different type and caliber that his association was an acute embarrassment. It was at first considered by some that his profession of faith was a trick to disrupt and destroy the movement, and he started his discipleship under a cloud of suspicion which only deepened as a result of his subsequent activities. There could not have been a more inauspicious beginning of a career marked by the highest courage and devotion.**

Paul, whose Jewish name was Saul, was a native of the important city of Tarsus in Cilicia, where Hellenic culture had been superimposed on an oriental one going back to the ancient Hittites. It is this pagan and heathen background which will subtly be immersed along with the Jewish teachings of Paul in the New Testament. **More on that later.** It has been suggested by some that his family adhered to the doctrine of the Pharisees, which meant that he had been brought up very strictly in his religion; but he also inherited the privilege of Roman citizenship. This is puzzling to some as this make difficult the understanding that he was in the employ of the Chief Priest, a Sadducee, carrying arrest warrants for members of the Jewish Messianic Sect of the Yeshua Movement. In order to do this Paul was aligned with the Sadducees and not the Pharisees at least for a while in his life. **We are told that as a youth he was sent to Jerusalem to study under the Jewish sage Gamaliel, grandson of the great Hillel. In his autobiographical references he reveals himself as an eager scholar, but one who like his royal namesake suffered from moods of resentment and depression. You may think this charge foolish** but in Titus 3:3 Paul states of himself: "I myself was once lacking in sense, ungovernable, erratic, a slave to various passions and pleasures, spending my time in resentment and jealousy, gloomy, hating others". **He was afflicted by some physical disability of an unpleasant nature which at times overcame him, and it has been suggested that in common with other men of genius, including Julius Caesar, he was a victim of the falling sickness, an epileptic.** This epileptic condition of Paul would be consistent with his character, abilities and mysticism**. It is clear that he had grandiose ideas related to the conviction that he had been chosen of God for an exalted mission, and anxious to establish his worthiness he plunged in excess into spiritual studies outstripping many of his contemporaries. These intensified his asceticism and gave him an almost morbid and fanatical sense of sin.**

**One thing is certain.** Paul had a violent and berserk antagonism to the followers of Jesus**. The Acts of the Apostles fails to clarify the reason for his frenzied opposition, but the cause of it comes out once we know that Paul was originally a Sadducee and the Sadducees had not faith in a Messiah or a Messianic Movement. In**

**fact it was a serious threat as they were under the charge of Rome to maintain the peace and control these religious people. Messianism meant revolt and upheaval which is unavoidable in ushering in the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus the reason for Paul, first of all a Sadducee, to persecute the Yeshua Movement.**

**After Paul's psychic experience, perhaps due to an epileptic seizure, as a result of which he gave allegiance to Yeshua as the Messiah, instead of returning to Jerusalem and making amends with the Yeshua Movement, he went into retreat in northern Arabia to wrestle with his problems and there he had 'an excess of revelations'. J. Klausner, *From Yeshua To Paul' pp. 324-330*, describes Paul's experience as holly consistent with an epileptic attack.**

**He had not been wrong in his youthful belief that he was a chosen vessel to bring the knowledge of God to the Gentiles. The voice that had spoken to him had confirmed what was in his heart. But he could see now where he stood: he was appointed of God as the personal agent and deputy of the exalted Messiah, to carry out his mighty work in the world until Yeshua should return in glory to inaugurate the reign of righteousness on earth. Henceforth he would live and move and speak at the bidding of the heavenly Messiah who was his master. He thought of his status as that of a trusted slave, so intimate with his owner, so fully in his confidence, as to be in effect his *alter ego.* Paul believed that he was the *eikon* (image) of Messiah, as Messiah was the *eikon* of God. He was convinced that in the mercy of God he had been judged and sentenced to assume a new identity as the reflection of Christ's presence. As he expressed it: 'In law I have died in the legal sense. I have shared Christ's crucifixion. I am alive, it is true, but strictly speaking it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me .From now on let no one deal me any more blows, for I carry the scars of Yeshua on my body' (Gal. 2:19-20, 6:17).**

**Paul's Christology brought him an inward peace and a tremendous joy. He was released from a guilt-laden conscience, able to throw himself energetically and enthusiastically into the work which he believed had been entrusted to him as envoy to the nations. He could brave all dangers and hardships. Yet for Paul to effectively manifest a Yeshua as the Christ who was no longer on earth created fresh problems. Paul dramatizes his Christ-concept through Pantheistic concepts (request our article on the Pantheism of Paul). He is acting, not always successfully, the part of Yeshua as he proclaims him, perpetually endeavoring to transform himself into a likeness which is alien to his true self.**

**He sees himself in a special sense as the one who makes Yeshua visible in the flesh. In his battered and uncomely body the marks and signs of the Crucified are paraded and displayed through the cities of Asia and Europe. But though the effort is genuine and Paul labors and sweats to make the identification as consistent as he can, the performance frequently does not come up to standard or is overdone. He had been denied personal experience of the human Yeshua and could not therefore hope to reflect the man Yeshua had been. Yeshua 'according to the flesh' had consequently to be left out of account, and Yeshua 'according to the spirit' or a cosmic Yeshua substituted, so that the nature and mind of the Messiah as revealed to Paul could be communicated to believers and transplanted into their hearts. He is very conscious of the difficulty of representing in any way adequately such an idealized figure, of his own unperfected character and traits breaking through. In vain he declares that he is nothing, for plainly he is something in his own right he will not boast, but he does boast.**

# SO WHY THE PROBLEM WITH PAUL BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH?

**It was not only the teaching and activities of Paul which made him obnoxious to the Christian leaders in Jerusalem like James, Peter, John, and others; but their awareness that Paul set his personal revelations above their authority and claimed an intimacy with the mind of Yeshua greater than that of those who had accompanied with him on earth and had been chosen by him. To them he was a presumptuous upstart. Paul and his theology was an abomination to the original Apostles, especially as his ideas were so contrary to what they knew of Yeshua, that he should pose as the embodiment of Messiah's will and dare to instruct them as if he were Yeshua himself. They may not have guessed**

**Paul's Messianic aim, but they did realize that he held himself to be uniquely and independently inspired. Physically insignificant, unlike King Saul of old, he yet—as that monarch had done in stature stood head and shoulders above his fellows. It became imperative to cut him down to size.**

**The Saul of today, who used the Roman name of Paul, was seen as the demon-driven enemy of the new David. When eventually Paul became a prisoner of the Romans the Christians neither of Jerusalem nor Rome lifted a finger to aid him.**

**Answer for yourself: Does this not seem rather strange to you?**

**There is a reason for this because they understood that in reality Paul was preaching a different Yeshua other than the one send by God (request our article on Changing The Message Of Yeshua). When Paul was a prisoner at Caesarea there is no mention in the Acts any Christian defending him or testifying in his favor (Acts 24-26). Regarding the Christians at Rome Paul wrote, 'At the first hearing of my defense no one supported me: everyone deserted me. May it not be counted against them' (II. Tim. 4:6). I find this rather surprising if he was considered "one of them" and they would know best. Because today we have a New Testament which is believed unquestioningly and a widespread ignorance of the Old Testament, the casual reader will read Paul without grasping that much of what is written under his name contradicts Yeshua's teaching as well as Moses and the Prophets. What escapes us today because of lack of familiarity of the Old Testament due to the over-emphasis of the New Testament to the almost exclusion of the Old Testament, was not a problem for the first century believer and he could spot "another Gospel" a lot more easily than we today! The simple reason for this is that the vast majority of our lives we have heard only Paul's account to the neglect of Yeshua' true message.**

**The allure of money is a strong influence. Regardless, none of Paul's efforts, including raising funds for the poor saints of Judea, had mitigated opposition to him. For the more intolerant of the legitimate Church Paul was a dangerous and disruptive influence, bent on enlisting a large following from among the Gentiles in order to provide himself with a numerical superiority with the support of which he could set at defiance the Elders at Jerusalem (Peter, James, and John). Surely this would exhibit to all who questioned his authority the genuineness of the call of God on his live, or so he thought. Paul had been the enemy from the beginning, and because he had failed in his former open hostility toward the Messianic Faith he had craftily woven himself into the fold to destroy it from within.**

**Answer for yourself: How so you ask?**

**This he was doing by setting aside the sacred Torah and recruiting anyone willing to join him on the merest profession of belief. He should never have been received; but there were those who were so innocent and unsuspicious that they had not realized what he was up to. That is the same fate of Christianity through the centuries as well as today. And we easily can see today to what a state of affairs their misplaced confidence had led today. The whole Nazorean cause, the cause of Messiah himself, was in jeopardy of being utterly discredited in Israel. Because Paul seemed to be one of its chief spokesmen and was announcing that the Torah was invalid as a means of salvation. It was Paul's theology that the Torah, be believed by pious Jews and the followers of Yeshua, were the worst kind of renegades.**

**Since it is the Pauline viewpoint which is given in the New Testament for the most part and not the viewpoint of Yeshua or the Jerusalem Church, we are obliged to search out and put forward how the situation appeared to those who have been scorned as "Judaizers". There was much more to their attitude than is generally realized. Naturally it was the principal plank in Paul's platform which was attacked because here his position was most vulnerable. But it was his pretensions which upset others most.**

# ARE THERE TWO GOSPELS OR ONLY ONE?

Two rival authorities among the Nazoreans, two presentations of Yeshua as the Messiah, two inspirations, two gospels, could not be tolerated. It stood to reason that no revelation which was of God could possibly contradict that which had been given by God to Israel through Moses and the Prophets, and what was so well known by Yeshua which had the same doctrine. The very novelty of Paul's teaching, therefore, condemned his revelations as fraudulent. The Jews have always known this because they are fully aware of what their Jewish Scriptures teach. It is we non-Jewish believes who are unschooled in Old Testament studies that fall prey to such Pauline deceptions in the New Testament.

**It was at Antioch in Syria, which Paul had made the base for his missionary operations and where for some time he had been a teacher of a Christian community numbering many converts from the Gentiles, that matters came to a head.** Unfortunately within the Bible we only have one side of the story in two versions, **a compromising account in the Acts and an uncompromising one in Paul's letter to the Galatians. We have to do the best we can to overcome both the bias and the discrepancies. Fortunately this can be done today by the student who will examine the legacy of history and the writings that survived the Catholic Church and their destruction of millions of documents which threatened their theology. I have done such a study and that is why I have adopted the position advocated in this article.**

**According to Paul's account Peter had come to Antioch and had made no difficulty about accepting the converts from the Gentiles as brethren. 'Before certain persons came from James he had eaten with Gentiles. But after their arrival he drew back and separated himself out of fear of those of the Circumcision. The other Jews played up to him, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.' Paul says that he publicly challenged Peter: 'If you a born Jew live like a Gentile, why do you force the Gentiles to keep Jewish ways?' The Acts omits this episode and makes no reference to the presence of Peter at Antioch. It simply declares that 'certain persons came down from Judea and instructed the brothers,** "Unless you are circumcised in accordance with the Mosaic ordinance you cannot be saved."

An important point in Paul's statement, much older than the Acts, is that the visitors from Jerusalem represented an official delegation from the Christian government whose president was the brother of Yeshua.

Now listen up! This suggests that information about Paul's first missionary journey, perhaps communicated by Mark, and the terms on which he was admitting Gentiles to membership, had got back to Jerusalem and had caused considerable alarm and dismay among Yeshua's church in Jerusalem.

**The Commission, as we may judge, did not question the right of Gentiles to be admitted into the family of Israel of which the Messiah was the head; but it pointed out that this** involved implicit obedience to the covenant made by God with Israel. **The people of Israel stood in a different relationship than did other nations, since they were sanctified to God by Commandments, so that they might be qualified to carry out His will in the world.** Yeshua the true Israelite was himself obedient to the covenant and upheld the Law by his teaching and example. It was incumbent, therefore, on all those wishing to ye joined with him and who aimed at likeness to him to follow in his steps and to exhibit, by circumcision and the practice of God's precepts and commandments, the outward signs of the inward grace.

The decision was taken, not at all to the liking of Paul, to refer the issue back to the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas were summoned to appear before the highest Christian court, and had no option but to obey. Paul naturally does not admit this in his letter to the Galatians.

**Now watch the deception at work.** Paul would have us believe that he went up to Jerusalem not because he was commanded to appear but that the Spirit led him. **Come on now Paul be truthful. He makes a virtue of necessity. 'I went up to Jerusalem by a revelation and reported to them the terms of the gospel I**

**preach to the Gentiles. This was privately to those of repute, in case I should strive or had been striving to no purpose. But there was no forcing of Titus, who accompanied me, to be circumcised, Greek though he was, despite the infiltrated false brothers who had crept in to spy out the liberty we enjoyed in Christ Yeshua in order to enslave us. Not for an instant did we strike our colors, so that the true character of the gospel might be preserved to you.'**

**Paul could see very well that appearing before the Christian leaders would put him at a double disadvantage**

**Answer for yourself: Do you know how?**

**First, Paul would seem to be subservient to the authority of the Jerusalem Apostles and James, whereas he claimed a superior and independent status. Next, his very small minority could easily be overruled and outvoted. If he failed to make good his case he would be completely discredited. His work and influence would be destroyed, and he could no longer claim to speak in the name of the Messianic Community which had in reality rejected and cast him off. The split would be irrevocable, and what then became of his mission? Paul was no schismatic: he could not conceive of a Church which was not an integral part of the Nazorean body politic, and which did not look to Jerusalem as its organic spiritual center. At least this was his view at the time. The risk of an adverse decision was for him, therefore, very grave.**

**Paul's astute mind conceived a plan for extricating himself. He would not wait for the session of the Nazorean Council, but first tackle the leaders privately, submitting his cause in suitable terms and emphasizing the nature, scope and success of his mission, with Titus as living confirmation. The leaders could not deny the operation of the Holy Spirit, and would then be bound to support him in the assembly. As a helpful gesture he consented to the circumcision of Titus.**

**We receive the impression from Paul's record of the event that the plan worked reasonably well. The issue was really settled out of court. The subsequent meeting of the assembly was fully under control. The Book of Acts understandably makes no reference to the private meeting, and proceeds with what followed. After an initial period permitted for the indictment of Paul, the moderate Peter took over. Paul and Barnabas then recited their experiences, and James the president summed up and gave his ruling. His findings were adopted and the meeting was over. Paul does not mention the proceedings of the assembly as Acts records it or its conclusions, since these did not bear out that he had scored a complete victory. He only gives in a breezy and offhanded manner his version of what took place at the private session with the leaders: "As for those of repute whatever they were makes no difference to me: God takes no one at face value they imposed on me nothing additional".**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul's response to the Jerusalem Church's authority seem a little sarcastic to you or is it just me?**

**But things are not always as they first appear, but often quite the contrary. Let us examine Paul's viewpoint first. "When they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the Uncircumcised, as Peter for the Circumcised . . . and when they realized the privilege that had been granted me, then James, Cephas (Peter) and John, the reputed "Pillars of the Faith", extended to myself and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. We were to go to the Gentiles, they to the Circumcised. Oh yes, they did add one more thing, we were to remember the poor, which personally I was only to ready to do."**

**We must understand that in Acts what Paul says here is no more than a half-truth. The outcome was not as he represents it. A Compromise solution had been found, but this did impose on Paul and his supporters certain conditions. There was no agreement at all about separate spheres of influence, and the Nazorean leaders did not relinquish their right to make converts among the Gentiles. We know this historically from the facts concerning the documentation of the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism up till 70 A.D. and the destruction of the Temple.**

***What we have been misled to believe is that Paul was converting Gentiles to Christianity when nothing could be farther from the truth since Christianity did not exist at that time, and conversion was always to Judaism with Yeshua recognized as its Messiah.***

**What they consented to do was simply reinterpret the position of those Gentile converts who did not become full Jews but chose to remain as God-Fearers (request our articles on the God-Fearers for further background).**

**Paul's concern was to secure that his converts from the Gentiles should be recognized as part of Israel. If he had been promoting a new religion this would not have been vital to him. It is those who have taken the teachings of Paul that lay outside of Judaism which have been successful in creating a new religion in Paul's name. Actually, Paul, for the most part, was doing nothing of the kind: he was building upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, proclaiming only what was predicted by the Scriptures, extending Israelite citizenship to believing non-Jews. All who believed in Yeshua should therefore be acknowledged as rightfully belonging to Israel. In other words they were being "grafted into Israel."**

**The Nazorean leaders had their own problem. They could not repudiate that the Holy Spirit had come on Gentiles as well as Jews. On the other hand, if no distinction was made between Israel and the Gentiles, so that non-Jewish believers were not required to surrender their Gentile state, then the revealed will of God would be nullified.**

**There was this common ground. Both parties agreed that the Israel of God, the Messianic Community as it then existed, was only a fraction of the whole. Part of the literal Israel had temporarily been split because of unbelief. The envoys of the Messiah were entrusted with the responsibility of giving opportunity—by allegiance to him—for these lost sheep to be brought again within the fold. But the ideal number of the people of God would be made up by the inclusion of multitudes not of Jewish origin. The ideal number is symbolically given by the seer of the Revelation as consisting of twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes plus ten thousand times ten thousand from all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues.**

**Prophetic Judaism brought the doctrine of the Faithful Remnant strongly to the fore, and this was bound to raise the question of how the prediction to Abraham would be fulfilled, when he was told (Gen. 15:6), 'Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and God said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.' A late Nazorean source, the *Clementine Recognitions,* explains: 'Inasmuch as it was necessary that Gentiles should be called into the room of those who remained unbelieving, so that the number might be filled up which had been shown by God to Abraham, the preaching of the blessed Kingdom of God is sent into all the world.' Dealing with the same question in Romans, Paul quotes Hosea to the effect that God would call those his people, who previously were not his people, and Isaiah that 'though the number of the children of Israel is as the sand of the sea, only a remnant will be saved. For the Lord will make a full and summary settlement on earth.' Paul argued that the promise to Abraham had stated that in him and his seed should all nations be blessed. The word seed is singular, implying the Messiah descended from Abraham. 'Those have been identified with Christ by baptism have assumed Christ's personality. It is impossible for there to be Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female, for in Yeshua Christ ye are all one and the same person. If you are in Christ you are the Seed of Abraham", heirs in accordance with the promise.' The nations are to be blessed in the Christians, of whatever origin, since by faith these are now Israelites.**

**Answer for yourself: But on what basis were the believing Gentiles to be included in the people of God?**

**Paul said, by faith in Yeshua as the Christ alone. If Abraham was accounted righteous because he believed God, in that case it was his faith which was rewarded and not his deeds; and the Law had not yet been given. If then faith alone was sufficient for Abraham our father, why should more be required of those who had never been**

**under the Law, and who also believed God? What was more, was the promise made to Abraham when he was circumcised, or while he was still uncircumcised? Undoubtedly, before he was circumcised. Therefore the promise had nothing to do with circumcision, and believers from the Gentiles could share in it without circumcision or observing the Law.**

# A CONTRARY VIEW IS EXPRESSED IN THE LETTER OF JAMES

**'Can you not realize, you dunce, that faith without deeds is unproductive? Was not our father Abraham was vindicated by his deeds when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar? Can you not see how faith assisted his deeds, and by his deeds his faith was perfected? And so the Scripture was fulfilled which states, Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as rectitude, and he was called the friend of God. You see, then, that a man is vindicated by his deeds, and not simply by faith." The whole history of the choice of Israel was against the opinion that obedience to God's commandments was superfluous.**

**The decision taken at Jerusalem was that so far as the Jewish followers of Yeshua were concerned there could be no doubt about their obligation to keep the commandments of God. But let the Gentile believers be granted a status equal to that which Abraham had before he entered into the covenant by circumcision. These Gentile believers must still demonstrate their belief by obeying the Primeval Laws applicable to all the sons of Noah from whom the nations derived. The court would not go beyond the regulations laid down for Gentile God-Fearers attaching themselves to Jewish communities throughout the Dispersion. Those who formally renounced idolatry and took upon themselves the Primeval Laws were to be regarded not as members of the house of Israel, but as equal participants in the blessings of the World to Come.**

**The brother of Yeshua as president announced the findings to be in accordance with Scripture. He chose the Prophet Amos as offering the necessary guidance.**

**It was written that God would destroy 'the sinful kingdom' (currently understood as Rome) from the face of the earth. Israel would be dispersed among the nations. The faithful among them would survive; but the rest would die by the sword. So ran the prophecy (Amos. ix. 8-l0). But it continued, that in those days God would restore the Messianic Community ('re-erect the fallen tent of David') and repair its breaches, and that a remnant of Edom' (Rome) should be saved. Here James exegetically substituted *Adam* for *Edom,* as the Greek Septuagint had done, to signify the rest of mankind, all the Gentiles upon whom the name of the Lord would be called.**

**'My verdict is, therefore,' said James, 'that those of the Gentiles who turn to God be not molested, but that we write to them to abstain from whatever is polluted by idols, from sexual impurity, from eating strangled animals, and from blood.' If they wished to go further the synagogues were there, where the Laws of Moses were read and taught every Sabbath. The verdict was a compromise. It was not to be insisted upon that believing Gentiles should become Jews through full-conversion and circumcision as a condition of recognition as brethren; but neither was Paul's contention allowed that such brethren were to be regarded as Israelites.**

**The assembly agreed to this ruling and Paul had to bow to it at the time. But he repudiated it later on when relations had worsened.**

**To prevent any misinterpretation of the decision, it was agreed that it should be delivered in writing to the churches, with two prominent Nazoreans, Judas bar-Sabas and Silas (Silvanus) to confirm and explain it verbally. These men would return with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch.**

# THE COUNCIL'S LETTERS TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCHES

**The text of the letter as given in the Acts reads as follows:**

**The Apostles and Elders, your brothers, present their compliments to the brothers from the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia.**

**Since it has come to our attention that some of our number, to whom we gave no such instructions, have been confusing you with their statements, unsettling your minds, it was unanimously resolved to send you special delegates along with our good friends Barnabas and Paul who have so devoted themselves to the cause of our Lord Yeshua Christ. Accordingly, we have commissioned Judas and Silas, who will confirm our decision verbally.**

**It was resolved by the Holy Spirit and ourselves to impose upon you no greater burden than these essential things, to abstain from what is dedicated to idols, from blood, from eating strangled animals, and from sexual impurity. If you keep strictly to this you will be quite in order. Farewell.**

**How far this letter is authentic it is now impossible to judge; but it bears many of the marks of genuineness. We should note that the Gentile believers are still considered to be Gentiles though addressed as brethren, and that the name of Barnabas precedes that of Paul as he was one of the Jerusalem Elders. The imposed restrictions, with one exception, represent what the Jews regarded as the minimal requirements for human society under God. The exception is the dietary law concerning animals killed for food by strangulation. This is actually omitted in the Western text of the Acts, but an alternative prohibition of eating flesh out a living animal is found in the rabbinical lists of the so-called Laws of Noah. The other three prohibitions are possibly related to the rabbinical primary crimes of Idolatry, Adultery and Murder. The same three figure in the Sermon on the Mount, Murder (Mt. v. 21), Adultery (27), and Idolatry (33) where the commandment against oaths involves idolatry in speech. Similarly in the Revelation (xxi. 8, xxii.) If 'whoremongers, murderers and idolaters' are grouped together among those who are excluded from the Tree of Life and the City of God, and meet their fate in the lake of fire.**

**Paul does not make any direct reference to the letter; but he may be referring to it incidentally when he lists among 'deeds of the flesh' these and other sins, and warns the Galatians (v. 19-21) that those who are guilty of them will not inherit the Kingdom of God. On the whole, in obtaining such a document, Paul had come off very well. He had secured official recognition of his work, and his Gentile converts were no longer compelled to become Jews through circumcision as before They were received as brethren but could not be accorded status as Israelites unless they became full-proselytes by obedience to the Law. They had full freedom of choice. Hands were clasped across the wall of partition; but the wall still stood.**

**The great importance of this first crisis in Christian affairs is that it plainly establishes that the Nazorean Council at Jerusalem, consisting of the Apostles and Elders under the presidency of the brother of Yeshua, was functioning in the character of a Jewish Sanhedrin as the *de facto* government of Israel loyal to the Messiah and exercising the same kind of powers. Its existence was an open and rebellious repudiation of the authority of the Jewish Sanhedrin now regarded by Jewish Zealots as pro-Roman and apostate.**

**Such is the account of Paul and the Jerusalem Council. Shalom.**

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# SEEING PAUL FOR WHAT HE REALLY WAS...AN ADVERSARY OF JAMES, PETER, AND THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

**Having read the previous articles in this series, you have now seen for yourself that Paul, in spite of his claims to the contrary, had indeed remained bitterly opposed to the many of the teaching in Christ's message, the main one being the substitution of "faith alone" for acceptance with God instead of "faith in God and obedience to His Word.". Saul (Paul before the alleged conversion) attacked Christianity in an effort to preserve, unchanged, the beliefs that Saul himself held so dearly that often were in conflict with normative Messianic Judaism.**

**Answer for yourself: If Gamliel, the head of the Pharisees, instructed that Peter and John were not to be beaten for their beliefs, then how are we supposed to believe that Paul, likewise a self-proclaimed Pharisee, wanted to not only hurt but kill them? By now you should have seen for yourself that such an attitude was totally foreign to a Pharisee but not for a Sadducee (which Paul was in the beginning).**

**Paul, who has become the leader of the Christian faith in the perspective of the early Gentile church, totally disregarded many of the doctrines inherent in Christ's teaching. Albert Schweitzer puts it quite succinct!' when he states:**

***Where possible he (Paul) avoids quoting the teaching of Yeshua, In fact even mentioning it. If we had to rely on Paul, we should not know that Yeshua taught In parables, had delivered the Sermon on the Mount, and had taught his disciples the 'Our Father.' EVEN WHERE THEY ARE SPECIALLY RELEVANT; PAUL PASSES OVER THE WORDS OF THE LORD. (The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, p. 171)***

**Thus, Paul succeeds where Saul failed. The Old Testament is preserved; and by merely claiming to "have faith in Yeshua," the MESSAGE of Yeshua is successfully silenced.**

## ARE YOU A "NEW" CREATURE OR NOT?

**Because the message of Paul has been misinterpreted so badly, today we as Christians practice a faith that is foreign to what both God and Yeshua desires. Examine the following:**

**2 Cor 5:17**

**17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (KJV)**

**17 Therefore <5620> if any man <1536> [be] in <1722> Christ <5547>, [he is] a new <2537> creature <2937>: old things <744> are passed away <3928> (5627); behold <2400> (5628), all things <3956> are become <1096> (5754) new <2537>.**

## Let us examine the Greek word for "new" as seen in the Strong's Lexicon:

**2537 kainos-new**

- a) as respects form: recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn
- b) as respects substance: of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

## Let us now see it from Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

**2537 kainos-new**

- a) as respects form: recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn
- b) as respects substance: of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

## Let us now see the Greek word for "creature" as seen in the Strong's Lexicon:

**2937 ktisis (ktis'-is); From 2936; original formation (properly, the act; by implication, the thing, literally or figuratively):**

**KJV-- building, creation, creature, ordinance.**

## ROOT WORD:

**2936 ktizo (ktid'-zo); probably akin to 2932 (through the idea of proprietor-ship of the manufacturer); to fabricate, i.e. found (form originally):**

**KJV-- create, Creator, make.**

## Let us now see the Greek word for "creature" as needed in Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

**2937 ktisis- the act of founding, establishing, building, etc.**

- a) the act of creating, creation
- b) creation, that is, a thing created; used of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation
- 1) anything created
- 2) after a rabbinical usage (by which a man converted from idolatry to Judaism was called)
- 3) the sum or aggregate of things created
- c) an institution, an ordinance

## ROOT WORD: 2ND SOURCE

**2936 ktizo-**

- 1) to make habitable, to people, a place, region, island; to found a city, colony, state
- 2) to create
- a) used of God creating the worlds
- b) to form, shape, that is, to completely change or transform

**Answer for yourself: Since Paul's own writing indicate the goal in becoming a new creature is to covert from**

**idolatry to Judaism, then by your own experience, is your expression of Christianity similar to Messianic Judaism in that you and your church keep the Saturday Sabbath and the Seven Festivals of the Lord in Lev. 23? Probably not!**

**Answer for yourself: Are you a part of a faith or attend a church which has replaced the 24-hour, seventh-day Sabbath with an hour or two of Sunday morning worship?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you a part of a faith or attend a church which has replaced the Biblical holy days with holidays of pagan origin?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you a part of a faith or attend a church which has replaced God's dietary guidelines with our own ideas about what we should eat?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you a part of a faith or attend a church which has replaced giving the tithe to places ONLY where God has placed his name to the general fund of churches who use the LORD's moneys in any way they desire? For your information the tithe in the Bible is to go to ONLY three categories or receptacles: 1) the widows, orphans, sick, lame blind, etc., 2) you are to keep part of your tithe to celebrate the LORD's Festivals and help the poor to observe them with you, and 3) to the Levite or the "teacher" who teaches the truth of God's Word and not the by-laws of your particular denomination.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you not realize that if your church does not distribute the LORD's tithe accurately then you are a party to "robbing God" and you have place yourself and your family "under a curse?"**

**The influence of Marcion continues to do this in the Church today. Mainstream Christianity has criticized believers for keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, for celebrating the Biblical holy days, for practicing the dietary laws, for placing their tithe in other places than their local church, and for refusing to shave their beards...all things that God has commanded. And, like Marcion, Mainstream Christianity often commands what God forbids: "Forget the Sabbath. Ignore the holy days and dietary laws, bring you tithe to the storehouse for the church is "the storehouse" (which it is not!). And shave that beard, so you'll look like a Christian!" (Many Bible colleges and seminaries command their students to shave the beard, in spite of God's command in Lev.19:27.)**

**Answer for yourself: If the above seems foreign to you, then have you really become a "new creature" in Christ, or have you just changed one form of neo-paganism for another?**

# THE JERUSALEM MOVEMENT AND THE LAW OF MOSES

**The law of Moses" included three separate groups of laws, composed by different hands at different dates and enlarged since. Exodus 20-23 went back, in part, to customary law under the pre-exilic kings; Deuteronomy to the authors of the book of the law c. 720-620, which had also been expanded since; Leviticus 11ff. to the priestly authors during the sixth century BC. There were serious gaps, obscurities and contradictions in this law, which was never one person's code so much as the amalgamation of disparate earlier writings." - Robin Lane Fox, The Unauthorized Version.**

**Moses legislated concerning the sacrificing of animals.**

**"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge you conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" - Hebrews 9:13-14**

**"The doctrine of vicarious atonement is...foreign to it [Mosaic Law]: a symbolic scapegoat might carry the sins of the people away into the wilderness, but no individual could or should cleanse another person of guilt by allowing himself to be punished instead. On this point the Mosaic tradition emphatically differs from the Christian. But it should be remembered that the Mosaic code includes the command to 'love thy neighbor as**

**thyself' and to assist the widow, the fatherless and the stranger. Moses would not have put it this way, but the Mosaic view was that love should co-exist with justice but not corrupt it." - David Daiches, Moses - *Man in the Wilderness***

**"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all..." - James 2:10**

**"It is abundantly clear from this that James and his followers in the Jerusalem movement saw no contradiction between being a member of their movement and being a fully observant Jew; on the contrary, they expected their members to be especially observant and to set an example in this respect. The corollary of this is that they did not regard themselves as belonging to a new religion, but as being Jews in every respect; their belief that the Messiah had come did not in any way lessen their respect for Judaism or lessen their fellowship with other Jews, even those who did not share their Messianic belief." - Hyam Maccoby." The Mythmaker"**

**"The Pentateuch states that all are equal, that no person may oppress or exploit another, that all have the right to be free and be independent masters of their own fate. Jewish Christians believed in the laws of the Pentateuch and struggled for the application of these laws in daily life, struggling against an oppressive establishment which argued against and did not keep the social laws.**

**"Paul preached against material independence, against social security, against freedom from oppression and exploitation. What he preached was the political ideology of an oppressive establishment." - Manfred Davidmann, "Origin of Christianity and Judaism"**

**Contrast the above thought with the following from Paul.**

**"All authority comes from God, so that rulers (those who are in a position of authority) have been appointed by God. Hence let every person submit to those who rule. It follows that whoever resists the rulers resists whom God has appointed and those who resist rulers will be punished, for rulers do not terrorize those whose conduct is 'good', but those whose conduct is 'evil'. Pay all those in authority what they demand, taxes, revenues, respect, honor." - Romans 1-3, 7**

**Paul's letters are the oldest recorded writings in the New Testament, Probably about 50 A.D. The Gospels, which were influenced by Pauline thought later followed, Matthew being regarded by most as the first. While Matthew can be seen as a manuscript meant to show Jewish people and New Christians the path back to the true meaning of the Pentateuch. Paul did much to separate Christian theology from Judaism, but without going into detail about the epistles, for the purpose of this presentation, let it suffice to say that Paul wrote many things that seem to have come from his own mind instead of from Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua. And when read with that thought in mind many things that Paul says in his letters are completely out of focus with the things taught in the gospel of Matthew.**

**The Torah and it's accompanying laws were set forth to assure equality of all men, social security, and protection from oppression. Early Christianity can be seen as an attempt to return to the basic core of social laws and system of the Pentateuch after these had been ravaged by the Jewish community. Then as Christianity was taking hold, those virtues were sidestepped by the establishment, in order to oppress the people and take power. Today we can see the Christian population looking more towards those original values as set forth in the Old Testament as the way to improve basic social laws and improve fairness and justice.**

**"This brought him [Paul] into conflict with Jewish Christians and with the mostly Jewish Christian communities and he was unsuccessful in changing their beliefs and practices. He then concentrated on gaining converts from gentiles (people who are not Jewish) who presumably knew nothing or little about the laws of the Pentateuch and who would thus be more likely to follow his teachings without arguing about its content." - Manfred Davidmann, "Origin of Christianity and Judaism"**

# DISCHARGED FROM THE LAW

**"So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith." - Galatians 3:24**

**"For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin." - Romans 3:20**

**"I would never have known the sin in my heart - the evil desires that are hidden there -if the law had not said, 'You must not have evil desires in your hear'. But sin used this law against evil desires by reminding me that such desires are wrong and arousing all kinds of forbidden desires within me! Only if there were no laws to break would there be no sinning." - Romans 7:7-8 (Living Bible)**

## ACCORDING TO PAUL, YESHUA'S LAW IS CONTRASTED WITH MOSAIC LAW

**"He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant--not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious" (2 Corinthians 3:6-8)?**

**"[Rosemary] Ruether (1974) argues that Paul, under gnostic influence, conceived of the *Torah* as a means of demonic rulership over the fleshly man of the dying age, whereas freedom from the *Torah* signifies freedom from the evil powers for the spiritual man of the coming age. Thus Judaism, or the Israel of flesh, is superseded by Christianity, the Israel of spirit. Although Paul speaks warmly of the Jews, whose covenant remains intact, and of the *Torah* as 'holy, just and good' (Rom. 7:12), he nevertheless focuses, in chapters 9-11, on the fact of Jewish disbelief." - Paul Harvey.**

**"While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit." - Paul in Romans 7:5-6**

## AN APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES...BUT WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE MESSAGE?

**"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." - Isaiah 49:6**

**Salvation and 'the kingdom' was being presented only to the Jewish nation initially. Christ even warned his disciples to go only to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**"These twelve Yeshua sent out, charging them, 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand".'" - Matthew 10:5-7**

**"Some scholars argue that Yeshua confined his work to Judeans, with the consequence that the mission to the gentiles is to be understood as a Christian overlay...A restricted mission [however] was not characteristic of Yeshua (he apparently had considerable contact with gentiles and went into foreign territory on occasion) but reflects the point of view of a Judaizing branch of the movement." - Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Yeshua Seminar, The Five Gospels.**

**According to Acts, Peter was the first apostle to allow gentiles to be baptized:**

**"And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the**

**Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." - Acts 10:45-48**

**"...Prior to Paul's appearance on the Christian Jewish scene, we see the name of Theudas who had claimed to be a messiah. History tells us that this Theudas was killed approximately the year 46 C.E. If we assume that Christianity began in the year 33 C.E., then we can conclude that prior to the entrance of Paul, post-crucifixion Christianity was in existence for some 13 years. Paul fills in the rest, in the book of Galatians. Galatians 1:18 indicates that the time between Paul's calling and his first visit to Peter (Cephas) was 3 years. He did not see any of the other apostles at that time except James, the brother of Yeshua." - Miryam Nathan, "Acts, the Jews and the *Torah*"**

**"But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother." - Galatians 1: 15-19**

**After increasing hostility from Jewish authorities in Asia Minor, Paul and Barnabas concentrated on converting Gentiles.**

**"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." - Act 13:46-47**

**The Law, Paul wrote, was a stumbling block for Jews to have faith in the Holy Spirit.**

**"What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but that Israel who pursued the righteousness which is based on law did not succeed in fulfilling that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it through faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall; and he who believes in him will not be put to shame." - Romans 9:30-33**

**Paul was deliberately provocative towards the Jews - in order to "save some of them".**

**"Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, 'I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.' Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.' But of Israel he says, 'All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people'.**

**Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them." - Romans 10:19-21, 11:13-14**

# JAMES AND PETER DISAGREE WITH PAUL....AND YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT!

**Within the writings of the followers of Peter and James is a totally different picture. These writings support the view that the major message that Christ presented was the picture of God as a loving and caring "Heavenly Father." They state that Christ's teaching corrected errors in the Oral Law of the**

religious teachings of the major Pharisee sect of his day, while affirming the teachings of the House of Hillel (the sect of Pharisees to which Yeshua belonged and championed).

**Now consider what might be the strongest bit of corroborating evidence yet discovered. The eminent Professor Schoeps talks about the Clementine Recognitions:**

**Since Paul was viewed at least by the descendants of the early Judaists as the adversary, as the echthros ("enemy"), Indeed, EVEN AS THE ANTICHRIST, It is probable that he was so regarded by the early Judaists themselves. (Jewish Christianity, p. 55)**

**Knowing that at least some early Christians viewed St. Paul as the Antichrist (the Beast). According to some scholars, it becomes even more probable that the reference to the number 666 did indeed stand for St. Paul!**

## PAUL'S OPPONENTS...WHO REALLY WERE THEY?

**There is no direct evidence in the Bible that some early Christians opposed the teachings of Paul. However, Paul's defense of himself in his letters is indirect proof of the existence of these detractors. With the discovery of the apocryphal works described earlier, the direct evidence has made itself quite clear.**

**Evidence that other researchers have come to the same conclusion can be found in the writers of S.G. F. Brandon, M.A., D.D., Professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester:**

**Paul himself provides ample evidence that his teaching and authority were being seriously challenged by powerful opponents. These opponents, as Paul warns his converts, were teaching a "different gospel" from that which he taught, and they were presenting "another Yeshua." Such statements can only mean that Paul's interpretation of the nature of Yeshua and the significance of his death was opposed by some other interpretation. The question of the identity of the exponents of this other "gospel" Is, accordingly, a matter of fundamental concern. Paul, curiously, despite his exceeding agitation over their activity, never names them.**

**Whomever they were, they were obviously Christians of great authority; for they were able to go among Paul's own converts and successfully present a rival Interpretation of the faith. Moreover, although he is so profoundly disturbed by their action, Paul never questions their authority as they did his. These facts, taken together with Paula very evident embarrassment about his relations with the leading Apostles of Jerusalem, point irresistibly to one conclusion only:**

***that the "other gospel" which opposed Paul's own, was the interpretation of the nature and mission of Yeshua propounded by the Jerusalem Church, which comprised the original Apostles of Yeshua and eyewitnesses of his life.* (Yeshua and the Zealots, pp. 152-153)**

## PETER'S LETTER TO JAMES-WHY IS IT NOT IN MY BIBLE?

**As one more example, I would like to quote a portion of the letter from St. Peter to St. James. St. Peter is describing how some people have misrepresented his teachings:**

***And this I know, not as being a prophet, but as already seeing the beginning of this very evil. For some tram among the Gentiles have rejected my legal preaching, attaching themselves to certain***

*lawless and trifling preaching of the man who Is my enemy (Paul).*

**[Once again, the identification of Paul as the enemy in this passage seen to be almost universally accepted by biblical scholars]**

***And these things some have attempted while I am still alive, to transform my words by certain various Interpretations, in order to the dissolution of the law; as though I also myself were of such a mind, but did not freely proclaim it, which God forbid! For such a thing were to act in opposition to the law of God which was spoken by Moses, and was borne witness to by our Lord in respect of Its eternal continuance; for thus He spoke: "The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." And this He has said, that all things might come to pass. But these men, professing, I know not how, to know my mind, undertake to explain my words, which they have heard of me, more Intelligently than I who spoke them, telling their catechumens (students) that this Is my meaning, which indeed I never thought of. BUT IF, WHILE I AM STILL ALIVE, THEY DARE THUS TO MISREPRESENT ME, HOW MUCH MORE WILL THOSE WHO SHALL COME AFTER ME DARE TO DO SO! (Clementines and Apostolic Constitutions, p. 2)***

**Summary**

**I have attempted to acquaint you with certain early Christian writings that were denied entry into the Bible. These works have supplied additional evidence to bolster what I discovered on my own through in-depth Bible study over the last 15 years; namely that Paul started a new religion based upon his own theology which often contradicts what Yeshua both taught and modeled for all mankind. More importantly, my articles have presented an alternative view of what Christianity should be. It is quite possible that they more closely represent the wishes and teachings of Christ than do the writings included in the New Testament. As Professor Schoeps explains:**

**The New Testament canon must surely be regarded as a tendentious, contrived product of the second century, by means of which the group which emerged victorious from the early battles over the direction to be followed by the Christians reinforced its view of things. Of the literary documents which were then extant, only those which were regarded as acceptable [by the Gentile anti-Semitic Church] were canonized; everything else was set aside and, for the most part, disappeared. This process proves a poor basis for answering the question "What really happened?" (Jewish Christianity, p.3)**

# THE INEVITABLE CONCLUSION...THAT BRINGS US TO OUR KNEES....AT LEAST I HOPE

**The choice of which version to believe is left to you, the reader. I only hope that these articles and our many websites encourages you to take another look at the doctrines of the Christian faith and to at least consider the possibility that the true gospel and correct view of the followers of St. Peter and St. James may be the correct one and the doctrines of Paul the incorrect ones. If you have never see this information before it is no wonder as unbelieveable and elaborate attempts have been made throughout history to keep this information from you.**

**Inclosing, I feel that it is appropriate to use a quote from St. James who is talking to his followers about the letter that he had received from St. Peter. This is the letter that describes the misuse of St. Peter's teachings by some people (including Paul).**

*Hear me, brethren and fellow-servants. If we pass on the books to all without discrimination and if they are falsified by audacious men and are spoiled by interpretations-as indeed you have heard that*

***some have already done-THEN IT WILL COME TO PASS THAT EVEN THOSE WHO EARNESTLY SEEK THE TRUTH WILL ALWAYS BE LED INTO ERROR.***

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# THE LAW ACCORDING TO PAUL…CAN WE BELIEVE HIM?

**Paul commenced his longest and most inclusive letter, Romans, saying categorically that the gospel he was preaching had been promised by God "through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who, as to his human nature, was a descendant of' David" (Rom. 1:2-3).**

**Answer for yourself: Is the above statement by Paul the truth? Had the Jewish Prophets really spoke of the "gospel" that Paul was preaching or is Paul lying?**

**This statement needs investigating and the answer might surprise you!**

## ROM 1:1-3

- **1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,**
- **2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)**
- **3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;**

**Answer for yourself: How well are you acquainted with the message of Moses and the Prophets in the Old Testament, and do you realize that if you are not well acquainted with them thoroughly then you don't have the tools necessary to evaluate Paul's above comment as to its truthfulness?**

**I am sad to say that it is my experience as a Pastor over a ten year period where I pastored full-time that I found that the vast majority of Christians today are lacking the necessary familiarity with the Old Testament that would enable them to recognize at first sight a perversion of truth when reading the New Testament.**

**Over the last several months I have made available to those who wish to look and further their spiritual maturity, overwhelming evidence of the above fact. We have together examined quotations of the prophets in great detail, priests, kings, and psalmist, and other leaders in Israel in relation to what they are recorded to have said in the Jewish Scriptures and their corresponding misrepresentation in the New Testament.**

***Without a doubt as we scrutinized we found the quotations of the prophets, priests, kings, and psalmists to always be relevant to happenings in their lives and to contemporary historical events. Nowhere were they speaking of events of the first century. None, I repeat, none of their statements offered evidence of Paul's assertion about his unique gospel emanating from them. No citation, when seen within its context and correctly translated, could be used***

***to validate much of what Paul says in the New Testament. Without a doubt nowhere in the Old Testament do we find evidence that can corroborate what Paul said in Romans 1:2-3; namely, that the gospel he preached could be traced back to origins emanating with Moses or the Prophets.***

## Someone is lying.

***If you are familiar with the Jewish Old Testament as taken from the Jewish Masoretic text and not the corrupted version that exists in the Christian's Old Testament and what it teaches then you know that no where does the Jewish Masoretic Old Testament promote many of the doctrines which Paul teaches.***

**What bothers me and promotes me to warn others is not just the false teachings in the New Testament, but the accrediting of them to holy men of old moved by the Holy Spirit, when in fact, they said nothing of the sort! I cannot let that pass unchallenged because I and others have seen such deception and deplore it. This is done to give a false "prophetic authority" to such misapplication of the Jewish Scriptures.**

# LETS BE TRUTHFUL..BECAUSE FEW HAVE BEEN

## Nowhere does Moses or the Prophets:

1. **Speak of a biological son of God**
2. **Speak of a "new" covenant superseding or replacing the one which God had made with Israel**
3. **Speak of another people (Gentile church) replacing Israel.**

**This means that much which we have learned and trusted, as written in the New Testament, is less than truthful. I know you find this hard to believe, but we beg of you to request our series of articles entitled "Evaluating The New Testament For Truth", and as you study them over weeks and months, you will see for yourself of what we speak. We can prove what we say. You will see how the New Testament has taken the religion of Jesus and literally destroyed it and created a false religion about his identity. This is Rome's gift to you and once you see it you should be angry at what has been taken from you by a bunch of anti-Semites thousands of years ago. It is not our intent at Bet Emet to argue with anyone, for we believe if you read the facts and evidence for yourself then the truth is self evident. But you must read to learn.**

**Without a background in the Pagan Mystery Religions, Gnosticism, and Second Temple Judaism, and the religion of Yeshua, you will do as I did for years….read the New Testament and not question anything. Lacking such a knowledge and background into these three areas you are relegated to reading the account of the New Testament concerning Jesus where all three of these religious ideologies have been woven in a unique manner into the life of Jesus. Not knowing which is which we assume by default that the whole picture is a truthful express of Jesus the Jew. Nothing could be further from the truth! We have been brainwashed to not think for ourselves but accept the New Testament as infallible and inerrant. Couple that with our lack of knowledge in these three religious areas and the result is spiritual blindness and we will never know...that is until someone instructs us and warns us. Thus the need for Bet Emet and ministries like it. Seldom do we question anything. Only after years of study was I able to see how this New Testament document was constructed, debated, disagreed on, tempered with, and constantly edited in a consecutive and chronological sequence in order to align with the latest Catholic Councils and their continuing evolution of Gentile theology. After having examined for myself the hundred of misquotation, mistranslations (done on purpose by the way) was I forced to admit to**

**myself that I had believed a lie. Repentance in my religious belief system was the order of the day. It may be for you too. Thus my warning to you who read our ministry materials**

**Paul can say that Moses, the Prophets, and the Jewish Masoretic Old Testament was the origin for his gospel, but those who know the Jewish Masoretic Old Testament know different. That is one major reason why the Jewish people, who again know their Scriptures better than non-Jews, cannot accept the Gospel attributed to Yeshua by Paul and which was taught by Paul.**

**The commands of the nation's law-giver, Moses, and the prophet may not always have been heeded but they were certainly understood by the people to whom they were addressed. What the Christian needs to remind himself is that the language and idiom, the metaphors and references in the Jewish Scriptures, were all familiar to the Jewish people. The Israelites and their descendants, called Jews, were neither blind, nor deaf, nor stupid in not perceiving in the words of their prophets a call to accept and worship a new manifestation of God or to repudiate and replace the Torah. Christians have fallen prey to such chiefly because of their ignorance of the Old Testament.**

***25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. (KJV)***

**And I guess I should tell you now that if you try to appeal to Romans 11:25 above that the Jews are blinded to the truth then you need to know that the vast majority of the passages in Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11 were not in the first New Testament and it's collection of Pauline writings and the above passage only appears after Irenaeus doctoring of the texts around 200 A.D. so to hold to the false idea that the Jews are blinded to the truth is somewhat ridiculous.**

# LET US REASON TOGETHER

**All Christians will admit that the New Testament is built off the validity of the Old Testament. So far so good, and it is easily understood that since the above being correct, then the authority and validity of the Old Testament is without question. In other words, the Old Testament, being true and attested to by Christianity, cannot be wrong or else its sister faith birthed from her also must be false. So it is impossible for the Old Testament to be wrong and the New Testament true, but it is possible for the New Testament to be false and the Old Testament true. Such can only occur when the New Testament contradicts the Old Testament. Our unfamiliarity with the Old Testament clouds our minds and we are not able to recognize when the New Testament is distorting the truth. So after we study the Old Testament precept upon precept, line upon line as instructed by Isaiah, then when we read the New Testament and find something that distorts or changes previous eternal truths then we have no recourse but to reject such as false. This takes not only courage but knowledge to do so. That is one reason why Bet Emet endeavors to teach the strong meat of the word to those who continually receive pabulum in their churches.**

**Christians fail to understand, because of effective New Testament brain-washing. We must never forget that these Charismatic spokesmen for God in the Old Testament were clear and emphatic in their messages: Israel must maintain a pure and exclusive belief in one incorporeal God Whose Law, combining ethics and ritual practices, must he observed. Far from heralding another faith or a radical interpretation of the Law on which their faith was based, the prophets exhorted the nation to show reverence for the Torah and loyalty to their common heritage.**

**Just as Paul communicated his wishes and expectations distinctly to his Gentile audiences so did the prophets clearly convey their messages to their listeners. It would be dishonest and invalid to second-guess Paul and read into his letters thoughts alien to those he constantly reiterated. It is just as unfair and unsound to take verses from books of the prophets out of their context and attribute meanings to the words which are**

contrary to the ideas repeatedly expressed by their authors. **Paul's Gentile respondents understood his religious ideas as they were integrated with pagan ideas filtered through Judaism. He spoke in their tongue and in terms of their cultural background.** What many of Paul's Gentile converts did not know, as many Christians today, was that Paul's gospel did not emanate "through God's prophets in the Holy Scriptures" as he attests and that "the Son" was not a product of those Scriptures but a new construct of later ones to which Paul richly contributed.

# BE ON GUARD WHEN READING PAUL

**Paul presented his doctrines within the framework of denigrating Jewish principles and values of the Jews themselves. While Jews saw the Law as divine and eternal, Paul saw it as limitedly divine and cancelable due to his heavy involvement into Gnosticism.** We find in Paul and his gospel a rather unique synthesis of Pagan Mystery Religions, Gnosticism, and Judaism.

**He denounced the Law due to his Gnostic leanings in general along with specific laws in particular such as circumcision and dietary prescriptions and proscriptions.**

***Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee (Paul), that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)***

**He sometimes engaged in direct personal vendettas against Jews, attributing offensive behavior or characteristics to them based on his perception of Biblical concepts such as the Chosen People idea. For [Paul and the religion he created] Christianity, anti-Judaism was not merely a defense against attack but an intrinsic need of Christian self-affirmation. Anti-Judaism is a part of Christian exegesis. Anti-Christianity is not properly a part of Jewish exegesis.**

**In the articles which follow I will attempt to present for your evaluation exegesis or explanation of Judaism and the depiction of Jews in terms of certain topics which occur and recur in Paul's letters. His epistles had the dual purpose of presenting his religious philosophy of faith and of fighting off the competition of Judaism for converts. One might describe this as an early "marketing" battle for the hearts and minds of people.** The legacy lives on today in the millions of good Christians who follow Paul believing he represents Yeshua and his faith when in-depth study of all the Bible reveal differently; in fact such study will reveal that Paul taught a completely different gospel from the gospel that Yeshua taught. Shalom.

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# THE "DANGERS" OF ACCEPTING PAUL'S VIEWS ON THE LAW

**In 2 Cor. 6:14-16 Paul called upon his congregation to separate itself from unbelievers. He contrasted good and evil as Christ and Belial which means worthlessness in Hebrew. His quotations here are from Leviticus, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Samuel. The verses he used have a two-fold message in their original context**

***I will be their God and they will be My people.***

**(LEV 26:12, JER 32:38, EZEK 37:27, similar in 2 SAM 7:14)**

**and**

***Come out from among them and be separate. Touch no unclean thing and I will receive you.***

**(Isaiah 52:11)**

**The assurance in the first phrase was given to Israel while the nation was wandering in the desert and again when settled in is own land. The advice in the second message was to leave Babylonia and is heathenism and return to Judea.**

**The exhortations were addressed to, and only to, the people of Israel. They were not directed to Gentiles. More importantly, they do not apply to any people being urged or willing to accept another deity. Paul was speaking or writing to Gentiles in Corinth, Greece.**

**Answer for yourself: Considering the above Scriptures, don't you find it amusing to think of Paul warning his Gentile parishioners not to touch anything unclean after having told them that everything was permissible (1 Cor. 6:12, 10:23) and having ridiculed the Law which made distinctions between clean and unclean, between the permitted and the forbidden?**

**The real message Paul was sending in his letters to the Corinthians and the Galatians was to separate themselves from a group which had become a serious threat to him because they were exposing his false teachings for what they were…lies based upon false pride. The Biblically illiterate Gentiles of Asia became easy pickings for Paul. It was these Gentiles who had learned about Judaism in the synagogues and felt an affinity to monotheism. Most had not accepted all the precepts of Judaism but were sympathetic to its principles. Paul found them a ready-made community to proselytize and had converted many of them to his faith. Then Paul discovered that many of his converts were reverting back to Judaism or Jewish practices. They and the Jewish-Christian missionaries who returned them to the fold of the Torah were called "Judaizers." The Judaizing Christians were a problem to Paul because converts remained Christians while insisting on following a Jewish style such as observing the Sabbath, celebrating Jewish festivals following dietary laws as mandated in the Torah for them. These "Judaizers" were a threat to Paul's efforts to indoctrinate his false beliefs and practices into his converts and followers.**

Paul expressed his greatest animosity for Judaizer, pronouncing a curse on them, when just the opposite is true for those who add to or take away from the Word of God (Deut.. 4:2). But it is only by understanding the conflict between Paul and the Judaizers and his bitter resentment of them as competitors that we can appreciate his virulent attacks on the Torah and his use or misuse of quotations from it. The Law is the underpinning of Judaism; by condemning it and its advocates, Paul hoped to weaken both. This, then, is the background and motivation behind Paul's choice of Pentateuchal quotations. He literally took the law out of the Law and transformed it into a mockery of Moses' messages. Paul, or a later Pauline writer since chapter 3 of Galatians was not in the original Galatiains until after 180 A.D., launched a battery of Biblical citations in Gal. 3. **The following paragraphs contain Paul's quotations, their original wording in Tanakh, and comments.**

*Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do every written in the book of the law" (Gal. 3:10).*

**Paul was saying in essence that once a person became a Jew and agreed to try to live according to the Law, he incurred the wrath and curses of God if he failed to uphold every statute.**

***On the other hand, Paul inferred, if one did not take himself the obligation of living according to principles in Pentateuch, he was then free to violate them without penalty so long as he had faith.***

Although Paul expressed another view later in the same letter (Gal. 5:19-21, 6:7-9), he nevertheless continued to propound the concept that the individual was not bound by any limitations provided, he professed the belief that Jesus is Christ.

**So often I hear Christians say that the Jew cannot be "saved" without faith in Jesus because they do not obey the law perfectly, but to one's amazement if they only knew a little about Judaism; … There is no hint in Rabbinic literature of a view such as the one Paul expressed, namely that one must achieve legal perfection through perfect obedience to the Law.**

**This neither corresponds to general rabbinic positions nor to those of any specific branch of the Pharisees such as the Shammaites who were considered stricter than others. "The Rabbis consistently passed up opportunities to require legal perfection." Paul's version of Dt. 27:26 is predictably different from its original source, viz "Cursed is he will not uphold the words of this Law to do them." It is important to know to what the phrase, 'the words of this Law,' refers. This is the last verse in the chapter and relates to commandments of a very serious nature. Mentioned in the previous verses. There is a series of imprecations against people who commit the following immoral acts: idolatry, dishonor of parents, removal of a neighbor's landmark (theft of his land), inhumanity to the blind, injustice to the helpless (widowed, orphaned, and foreigner), incest and beastiality, murder, and bribery. Many of these offenses might never be discovered or judged in a law court. The Mosaic Law stated that God would judge the offenders and curse (punish) them for their wickedness. This, according to Torah, would be the fate of those who violated serious ethical laws, whether or not they expressed a belief in the Mosaic code.**

Paul said in direct contradiction to the Deuteronomic phrase he cited **that no one will be justified by the Law because "the righteous will live by faith." This is the same error he makes repeatedly as seen in the previous articles. We discussed this phrase from Habakkuk at the beginning of this series of articles. Of course no one will be justified by the Law or rather the Law will not justify any wanton and deliberate offender. On the contrary, the righteous Jew or Gentile will be justified by his good behavior which is his response to faith in God and His Word.**

**Immediately after Paul's quote in Gal. 3 of the phrase in Deuteronomy with his anti-Torah interpretation, Paul will now do something he has not do often; he quotes correctly an Old Testament passage from Leviticus coupled with an explanation consistent with its meaning. He stated that the Law is not based on faith and**

**illustrated this with Lev. 18:5:**

***You shall keep My statutes and ordinances and the man who does so shall live by them."***

***It is a sad shame that he vacillates between these positions in his writings, and even sadder that the Christian Church as so ill-prepared their flocks that in reading the Bible they overlook such errors.***

**Answer for yourself: Are you now beginning to see the importance of studying your Hebrew Roots?**

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# DOES PAUL HAVE DOUBLE VISION WHEN VIEWING THE LAW?

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul lie to us in the New Testament? Oh, yes; many times.**

Later in Paul's life we find Paul's concern to undermine the Law was close to an obsession. For, in order to replace the Law with his teachings which came not as he stated in Romans 1:2-3 "through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures", he devoted his life to construct a case against it as the way to righteousness. **But he was in a bind. As the builder, developer, and inventor of' Christianity, he found himself' in the peculiar position of both depending on and having to denigrate the Jewish Scriptures.** Paul was in a difficult position since having to use the Jewish Scriptures to legitimize his claims and his gospel, yet at the same time often twisting the words and their meaning in the process to bring meanings totally foreign from what the original writers of the Jewish Scriptures intended**. Paul was very cleaver. He strategy was to both call on the Tanakh to validate his statements, while at the same time to misrepresent them to his non-Jewish audiences who were for the most part totally ignorant concerning them (just like the Christian church today). This was like taking candy from a baby. The confusion for the typical Christian lies in the recognition that Paul some of the time acknowledged the Jewish Scriptures, their prestige and value.** He even admitted, with a grudging ambivalence, some of the qualities of' the "law" in Rom. 7:7, 12, 14, 16.

- Rom 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (KJV)
- Rom 7:12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. (KJV)
- Rom 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (KJV)
- Rom 7:16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. (KJV)

However, at times opposite views of the Law suited Paul better and he found himself required to denounce the Torah and the Jewish Scriptures, which being an essential part of his own Bible, was fundamental to both Yeshua and Judaism. So, Paul not only supported his brand of Christianity on Judaism, but would at various times try to destroy it in the process of establishing a new faith on the remains and the ashes of its predecessor.

## OBSTACLES THAT PAUL OVERCOMES IN OPPOSING THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES AND TORAH

**One of the first obstacles that Paul had to overcome in his opposition to the Torah, especially for his Gentile converts, is that the Jewish Scriptures were included in his letters which would later, following his death, be incorporated into the New Testament in the Christian Bible. The entire Hebrew Bible was canonized by the Church.** This oscillation of Paul concerning his views on the Law along with his inconsistency in his writings where we see him one moment accepting and then later rejecting the Law is a reflection of

**Paul's unstable religious belief system (Sadducee, Pharisee, Gnostic, etc.) Paul was a little of all three as shown in the New Testament.**

If one will read the New Testament closely and slowly, while looking for such discrepancies, one will overcome with Paul's contradictory statements about the Law and the Torah. Paul's mutually opposing ideas are vividly exemplified in various verses in his letter to the Romans. **As E.P. Sanders expressed it, "How can Paul say both that Christians die to the law (7:4) and that the law is to be upheld (3:21) and fulfilled (8:4, 13:8-10) or that God gave the law and it brings sin and death, (8:2)."' (E.P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 85). Sadly, these contradictions are a mirror image of the Church's attitude toward the Hebrew Bible and Jews.** This mixed up mess is Christianity's heritage from the pen of Paul. The apostle denounced the Law with charges that ran the gamut from claims that observance would not bring righteousness to charges that the Law brought God's wrath and curse, and eventually, death. **Years ago when I did not know the New Testament very well, or the Jewish Scriptures in the Old Testament, so I would continually go to church and hear such derogatory statements made by my preacher concerning the Law. He had been brainwashed by Paul as I had. The answer for me came in study of the Old Testament whereby I came to understand what it actually taught as well as how the Christian Old Testament were forgeries when compared with the true Jewish Scriptures. Then when compared to what Paul said in the New Testament I realized that both were completely contradictory.** As I continued my studies over the years I learned for myself that the very same letters which expressed this condemnation ironically contained statements from Paul that were the complete opposite. I quickly began to see for myself that one moment Paul was condemning the Law and the next moment he was saying that the Law is holy, righteous, spiritual, and good! This is the fruit of a schizophrenic mind.

**As we continue our articles I wish to address a topic or topics from the pen of Paul concerning the Law which are presented within the New Testament from the pen of Paul which are considered as "truth" by Christianity, but which can, upon intense examination, be shown to be flawed and misrepresented.**

**Let us conclude this first article with one of Paul's criticisms , since there are many more of them than accolades. Paul states;**

***Therefore no one will he declared righteous in his (God's) sight by observing the law. (Rom. 3:20)***

***Clearly no one is justified before God by the law... (Gal. 3:11)***

**Paul's claim that the Torah could not bring righteousness is a contradiction of the message of the entire Hebrew Bible, which, it will be recalled is considered sacred in Christianity.** Throughout the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible consisting of the Law, Prophets, and Writings) the Israelites were assured repeatedly that righteousness would result from observing the Laws and Commandments of God (the Torah).

**Deuteronomy 6:25 attests to this guarantee:**

***And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.***

**Similar thoughts are found in other Biblical books such as in I Kings 2:3 in which David imparted his last advice and charge to his son, Solomon, before he died:**

***Keep the charge of the Lord your God to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, commandments, ordinances, and testimonies, as written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.***

**From Paul's premise that righteousness did not come from the Torah regardless of what Moses or David said, but from faith. Not only did the Law have no positive value for Paul, but it actually brought on sin and transgression. A sample of his remarks on the cause of sin follows in our next article.**

***through the law comes the knowledge of sin (Rom.3:20)***

***for apart from the law sin is dead (Rom. 7:8)***

**The above citations give the impression that the world knew nothing of sin until the Hebrews defined it in Torah. Genesis is full of stories about the sins of its protagonists. Most of the events in it, according to Scripture, occurred before the laws were bestowed on Israel. Beginning with the first family of the Bible, we read about the misdeeds of Adam, Eve, and Cain for which the parents were expelled from the Garden of Eden and the son was condemned to be a wanderer on the earth. The wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah is vividly described as well as their destruction -- as punishment for the sins of the inhabitants. From the beginning of Genesis to the end there are accounts of sinful behavior. Wickedness was known, recognized, and punished long before the advent of' the Law at Sinai.**

**The Torah confirmed many of the basic values about human behavior which had evolved in the course of human existence on earth. It clarified and spelled out what was expected of people and set standards to strive for. The Law described and forbade sin, but did not invent or introduce it.**

**The next stage in Paul's case against the Law is seen in his statement, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression" (Rom 4:14). So, unless an act is specifically defined as a breach of the law, the transgressor is not responsible. If we follow this reasoning to its logical conclusion, we are left with an absurdity compounded by an outrage. In Hitler's Germany there was no law against murdering Jews. Hence, in accordance with Paul's thinking, the annihilation of six million Jews was not a transgression. The people didn't know it was a sin because there was no law against it. Aside from the perverted thinking -- if there is no law or you don't know it, it isn't wrong -- this line of reasoning is a strong argument for laws. It becomes a moral imperative to have legislation to counteract such ideas. However, despite Paul's philosophy, there are laws of morality whether or not they have been committed to paper. A moral and just society will inevitably legislate ethical laws and provide for their enforcement as well as deterrence by appropriate punishment for violations. Assuring salvation and forgiveness of sins to wrongdoers on the basis of their profession of faith is not a deterrent. It could have the opposite effect and encourage further breaches of the law. Moreover, guarantees of grace in exchange for faith do not render compensation or justice to the injured.**

**As we close we must look at Paul's complete repudiation for all that he has said up to now and we find it one the next page in Romans where Paul taught opposing the Law for justification: Romans 2:12..**

***Rom 2:13 13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: I challenge you to tell me that the above passage is not a direction repudiation of what Paul has said in Romans 3:20...**

***Therefore no one will he declared righteous in his (God's) sight by observing the law. (Rom. 3:20)***

**Answer for yourself: As we close we must ask: Where can we believe Paul and where can we not when reading his epistles?**

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# DID PAUL CONTINUE TO BRING BLOOD SACRIFICES AFTER THE DEATH OF YESHUA…AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR CHRISTIANITY TODAY?

**Before we begin let me see if we can agree on a premise before reading this article.**

***A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, and archeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change***

**If you can admit to the truth of the above statement, then read on. If not, you need not continue.**

**If you were like me then most likely you grew up in the Christian church. Having done so you probably, like myself, were fed a steady diet of the book of Hebrews. In that book which is traditionally attributed to Paul as being the author, we are told that Yeshua was the ultimate sacrifice.**

**In particular we read:**

- **Hebrews 9:12-14 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us…..How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**
- **Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.**
- **Hebrews 10:1-2 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2. For then would they not have ceased to be offered?**
- **Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all**
- **Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified**
- **Hebrews 10:18 Now where remission of there is, there is no more offering for sin**

**After writing these passages the writer goes even so far as to say in Hebrews 10:20….”by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his body” and Hebrews 10:22 “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith…”**

## NOW FOR THE HARD PART

**Although it cannot be proven for certainty, the tradition of the Church maintains Pauline authorship for the book of Hebrews. As early as the second century Paul was regarded in the East as the author, and during the**

**third century his authorship was the accepted view. In the West, where the epistle was known from earliest times, Pauline authorship was rejected and did not gain acceptance until the fourth century.**

## *Having said that, then we should expect to find examples in Paul's life where he lives out the doctrines of salvation espoused in the book of Hebrews… especially the one concerning the finality of Jesus Christ's death as the final atonement for sin?*

**Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul, in his life after the cross, share with us examples whereby he shows us that he believes that Yeshua "once for all" redeemed us from sin? Astonishingly, no he doesn't! In fact I will show you in a minute he does just the opposite!**

**Answer for yourself: Can we find examples in the Apostle Paul's life where he goes against the teachings of the book of Hebrews and continues to bring blood sacrifices for sin as an atonement after the cross? Yes. We will examine the book of Acts and the book of Numbers to prove it to you shortly.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate through a Nazarite vow and its accompanying blood sacrifices (Num. 6) that he was obedient to the rules and laws of the Pentateuch and the Mosaic Law, thereby producing a state of approval before God after the cross? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: How could obedience to the laws of God (including those dealing with blood as well as non-blood atonements) produce a state of approval when we are told different today? It sure does and does so easily. If we look up the word used for "law" in the New Testament we find the correct meaning in the Greek:**

**The Greek word for "law" is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 3551**

**3551 nomos {nom'-os}from a primary nemo (to parcel out, especially food or grazing to animals); TDNT - 4:1022,646; n m**

**AV - law 197; 197**

- **1) anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command**
- **1a) of any law whatsoever**
- **1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of God**
- **1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of God**
- **1a2) a precept or injunction**
- **1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason**
- **1b) of the Mosaic law, and referring to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents**
- **1c) the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch), is put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT**

## *IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THAT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE APOSTLE PAUL BRINGS BLOODY SIN OFFERINGS AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION OF YESHUA…..SO WHAT GIVES?*

**That's right it can! Let us now examine the word "offering" as used of the type of sacrifice Paul is recorded as having made in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow in Acts 21:26.**

**Acts 21:26**

**26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.**

**(KJV)**

**The Greek word for "offering" as used in the text is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 4376**

**4376 prosphora {pros-for-ah'} from 4374; TDNT - 9:68,1252; n f**

**AV - offering 8, offering up 1; 9**

- **1) the act of offering, a bringing to**
- **2) that which is offered, a gift, a present. In the NT a sacrifice, whether bloody or not: offering for sin, expiatory offering**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this offering could be bloody or not? Yes. So we have to keep studying deeper to get to the truth cause as of now it is unclear which type of offerings Paul brought.**

**Answer for yourself: How do come to the correct understanding about whether Paul brought blood sacrifices on non-blood sacrifices? Easy. We let the context of the passage define it for us.**

***And since this offering occurs after the cross - the ramifications of such an offering if is "blood" has staggering consequences for traditional Christianity and Christian doctrine.***

# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S OFFERING IN DETAIL

**We need only to look at what was required in numbers 6 for one who undertook a Nazarite vow.**

**Since this is a Nazarite vow as described in Acts 21, which occurs almost 30 years after the death of Yeshua, we must look no further than the commandments surrounding the Nazarite vow and these are recorded for us in Numbers chapter 6 to determine if the offerings attendant with it are "bloody" or not:**

**Numb 6:13 (KJV) And this [is] the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings, 15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings. 16 And the priest shall bring [them] before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering: 17 And he shall offer the ram [for] a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering. 18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put [it] in the fire which [is] under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. 19 And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put [them] upon the hands of the Nazarite, after [the hair of] his separation is shaven: 20 And the priest shall wave them [for] a wave offering before the LORD: this [is] holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21 This [is] the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, [and of] his offering**

**unto the LORD for his separation, beside that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.**

**Answer for yourself: First of all, did you notice that one who undertook a Nazarite vow was required to bring peace offerings as well as sin offerings?**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find this rather strange in light of what Hebrews teaches, yet we have Paul's example to the contrary?**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul is the writer of Hebrews, and if he ascribed to such doctrines taught in Hebrews then why is he doing just the opposite?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that these peace and sin offerings required the killing and spilling of an animal's blood which had to be sprinkled on the altar?**

**Answer for yourself: Having read Numbers 6, do you see for yourself that blood sacrifices had to be brought in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow which Paul was obedient to over 30 years after the cross? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Does it look like it to you that Paul believed, as seen in his actions, that Yeshua was the last sacrifice once and for all? No way.**

**Answer for yourself: Does it appear to you that the writer of the book of Hebrews 10:1-2 is correct when it states that blood sacrifices for sin had "ceased to be offered?" No way. Evidently Paul surely does not seem to believe it by his actions.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you say that by Paul's actions he believe that the offering of the body of Yeshua was a once for all sacrifice for sin? You sure can't!**

**Answer for yourself: How can be believe Hebrews 10:14 where it says we are "perfected forever" by the sacrifice of Yeshua when just 30 years later the Apostle Paul was still bring sin offerings to the Temple (after the death of Yeshua)?**

**Answer for yourself: Over the course of thirty years had Paul forgotten that "Now where remission of there is, there is no more offering for sin" as Hebrews 10:18 professes? Evidently he did not ascribe to such a teaching as evidenced by his life and actions.**

**Answer for yourself: How can we draw near to God with a true heart when we have been taught a doctrine by our Christian church which cannot be substantiated by looking at Paul's life when he is the one believe to have written it in the first place?**

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul bring "blood sacrifices" and "sin offerings" if the Law had been down away with in Yeshua's death or if Yeshua's death had been understood as the final sacrifice of all sacrifices? He most assuredly would not have done so.**

**Answer for yourself: From the examples I have shown you, how can you in true faith believe that there is a "new way" when it can be shown by Paul's life that there is not any new way at all, but that the only way given to God by man was still followed by him as well as gentile coverts he taught?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that maybe for the first time you are seeing the many conflicts in the New Testament which lie just before the surface of the English translation?**

**Answer for yourself: Will you admit to yourself that what you have just saw throttles mainline Christianity and its teachings about the death of Yeshua as a final atonement for sin? (request our in-depth teachings on atonement and get the answers you need..they are free).**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that not just in Hebrews, but all through the New Testament we have passages which pass for "truth," which upon just a little investigation can be shown to be Gentile fabrications created by Roman and Gentile authors to change the faith of Yeshua into a faith about him and replace Biblical Judaism intended for all mankind with neo-paganism which was their heritage?**

**Answer for yourself: In other words, are you aware that as a typical Christian you practice a replacement faith which can be shown to be in error by anyone well versed in both the Jewish as well as the Greek Scriptures?**

**You might ask yourself why no one besides me has pointed this out to you before. I can assure you that there are multitudes coming to the realization to which I bring you today. The Last Days are upon us and as the Prophet Hosea states that in the Last Days God will restore the roots to the faith of the Gentiles. Simply, the vast majority of Christian pastors and teachers today are not qualified in the study of the Scriptures to lead anyone as evidenced by what I showed you today. I too like you was led astray by my spiritual leaders as well as my Seminary. Such is the sad reality to which I was born, and only departed after many years of in-depth study to find the truth when my studies challenged much of what I had accepted "by faith." Faith should only confirm and not contradict Biblical facts! But the roots of Gentile anti-Semitism created a new theology to replace what God had given all mankind. The legacy remains today and most are not aware.**

**The fact that Paul does bring blood sacrifices COMMANDED BY THE LAW testifies to him and should to us that the Law had not passed away after Yeshua's death as a pattern for life for believers in Yeshua and his message as we so often have been told. But more than that it demonstrates two things:**

- **1. That Paul evidently did not think that Yeshua's death was a sacrifice to end all sacrifices.**
- **2. That Paul still felt the need to obey the Law after the death of Yeshua, even laws concerning sin offerings as an atonement for sin.**

**Answer for yourself: Is that the message you have received from your church?**

**Answer for yourself: Has you church or clergy studied deeply enough to search out these truths buried beneath the pages of your Bibles or have they accepted the "echoes" of the past as truth even when the text of your Bibles correctly interpreted says different?**

**Answer for yourself: What does that do to the traditional teachings we hear week after week in our churches preached by those who repeat what they have heard and not studied out for themselves? Should we feel secure?**

**Answer for yourself: Dear Christian, can you now see that the Law had never passed away after the cross and we have severely misunderstood the message of the Bible and in its place accepted the traditions of men…many of which are in error and contradict the truths given by God? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to guess at the staggering consequences facing you since not only the Law has not passed away, but it seems Yeshua's death was not understood by the first believes as a final atonement for sin as we have been told?**

**Answer for yourself: As most who read these thought-provoking articles are Christians, do you understand that you, like I did before I learned the truth, have lived most of your lives as "Lawless Believes" and are trusting for you atonement something other than the Bible teaches and what Paul actually believed?**

***Needles to say we have a great contradiction. Paul's life speaks otherwise than what is attributed to him in his letters. What we have to come to terms with is that much of what is believed written by Paul is rhetoric put into the mouth of Paul by the early Gentile Church. For you have seen hidden beneath the lines of your Bible evidence which contradicts much of what we***

## *are told Paul wrote. The both cannot be reconciled!*

**It is almost too scary to consider the many sins we have committed "under grace" without the guidance of God's Law which would have regulated our conduct and behavior if followed. Bet Emet Ministries continues to warn the Christian concerning the Law and its demands made upon one's worship of God through the correct giving of the Tithe, as well as the sanctification and observance of the many appointed times with God as commanded in the Law concerning His Festivals and Saturday Sabbaths. Not only this, but the Law details other than non-blood atonements which often are the subject matter of the teachings of Yeshua in the "red" of our Bibles, but our unfamiliarity with the Bible blinds us to such understanding. The only problem is that we, for the most part, don't know the Law and are not aware of what God gave besides animal sacrifices that atones for our sins. We must repent if we truly are believers in God and love Him more than our erroneous traditions.**

# SO WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE PASTOR CRAIG?

**We at Bet Emet Ministries realize that the vast majority of our readers have never had the opportunities presented to me as well as others who are part of our ministry to study in-depth to the degree that we do.**

**I personally understand the great handicap this presents to the average Christian believer today. The average believer cannot read either Hebrew or Greek and is at a total loss in coming to terms with the original language in which the Bible was written. Those who try to study rarely go deep enough since lacking the skill to do so to the degree necessary to arrive at pertinent information such as this article has provided. Thus, they find themselves dependent upon their local spiritual authorities for spiritual guidance in the Scriptures.**

**This is the tragic irony of all! Much within the documents comprising the New Testament can be shown to be Gentile fabrications when viewed against the religion of Yeshua which was Biblical Judaism.**

**As I have shown you in this article alone, a thorough understanding of the Bible and the Jewish Scriptures is necessary to accurately understand the events of the New Testament. Without such a background one is easily led astray by the "agenda" of the Gentile authors of the books of the New Testament in spite of the fact they carry "Jewish names" (given by Jerome). The real apostles of Yeshua had nothing to do with the writing of the Synoptic gospels, for just a cursory background in Judaism betrays the mistakes and errors within the Synoptic Gospels that pass for "Judaism" to the unlearned, which in reality never were a part of the Judaism practiced in the first century. The pagan religions of the non-Jews who were familiar with mystic blood cults. It is not surprising to find in Mythric cults, as well as others, liturgies in their pagan rites often quoted word or for word in the New Testament. How are we to account for this as if given to us by a Jewish Rabbi who fought and gave his life to strengthen the faith of Moses? The chronology and evolution of the Canon of the New Testament which was disputed, argued, debated, and challenged up until the first millennium after Yeshua.**

**One you come to an understanding that there was not a consensus of opinion concerning the books we take for granted was "inspired scripture," and that consensus was arrived at only after hundreds and hundreds of years, then your opinion of these documents as "authoritative" will quickly vanish. Not only were books "in" and "out" of the Canon of the New Testament repeatedly, but this nonsense seriously calls into questions the role of the Holy Spirit in the selection process itself. Besides that, if you are acquainted with the theologies of those who did the selection, then you should be horrified that God would allow such an important task to fall into the hands of idolaters such as the early Roman Church. Let us not forget it was these people who prayed to the dead, believed in Mary as co-mediator with Yeshua, believed in purgatory, believed in purchasing indulgences to get people out of hell, baptized infants for salvation, etc.**

**Answer for yourself: It is to these we are to look for "inspired Scripture**

**I could go on and on, but you see the point. If you would like more in-depth teachings concerning the Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith, how the original faith taken in the Great Commission was**

**corrupted and later changed by Roman invention and how you can return to "the faith once given to the saints," please contact us. Shalom.**

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# IN SPITE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT'S PORTRAYAL OF PAUL...HE WAS STILL AN ENEMY OF THE FAITH OF JESUS

**Answer for yourself: Can you guess who said this: "Paul was the great leader of a sect or movement that was responsible for the corruption of many of the doctrines Yeshua taught"?**

**Answer for yourself: Would you believe it was Thomas Jefferson?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that Paul, after first attempting to destroy the Christian faith from without, ended up corrupting it from within? Not so you say, well when you have studied the sources like I have for over 15 years you won't be so quick to refuse such a statement. The facts and evidence speak for themselves when viewed and considered; the only problem the vast majority of Christians have today is that the only records that they have evaluated are the collection of altered documents collected by the Catholic Church in 380 C.E. which we call today the New Testament. Dear believer, these were not the only records that exist, but since the Catholic Church controlled both religion and state during the Dark Ages, it was easy for them to control the documents and their fabrications in places. But back to the issue at hand. Although much was corrupted, they could not destroy all the instances which reveal another story than what you have heard.**

## PAUL'S AUTHORITY

**Answer for yourself: Recognizing that Paul was responsible for much of the New Testament (either directly or through his influence), just where did he gain the authority to take on this task?**

**Answer for yourself: What did Yeshua have to say about Paul? He said "_____."**

**That's right, nowhere in the Gospels is Paul even mentioned.**

**Answer for yourself: Isn't that rather strange since the Gospels were written from 10 to 50 years after Paul (depending on which one we refer to)?**

**On the other hand, Yeshua makes a very straightforward comment about Peter and the future of Christianity:**

**And so I tell you, Peter: you are a rock, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, and not even death will ever be able to overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted In heaven. (Matthew 16:18-19)**

**Here, Yeshua the Messiah states in very plain language that Peter will be the one to establish Christ's church here on earth. However, in the New Testament, Peter is represented in only two letters (1 Peter and 2 Peter [Most biblical scholars agree that 2 Peter was not written by Peter.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever thought it rather strange that Yeshua tells Peter he will be the one to**

**establish the church, yet we have very few writings about or from him, but tons of stuff from Paul instead?**

**Answer for yourself: Have writings from Peter been destroyed in history because he was too Jewish for the Gentile Catholic Church? Many scholars believe so, and in these last years archeologist have discovered written records from Peter. More on that later.**

**Therefore, the amount of Peter's material that was Included in the New Testament is even less than it would appear because out of the whole New Testament his letters take up only about six pages. Six pages!**

**Answer for yourself: Can you conceive of six pages from the one told directly by Yeshua to establish his church, especially when compared to Paul's writings which make up more than 2/3 of the New Testament?**

**Compare this with the writings of Paul (Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon). Somehow,**

**Answer for yourself: Does it seem like to you that Paul, in spite of Christ's direct wishes, took control of the Christian church away from Peter?**

## PAUL AND PETER DON'T GET ALONG

**Paul's comments about Peter possibly indicate the types of methods that Paul used to accomplish this end:**

**But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him in public, because he was clearly wrong.**

**Before we go on, let me encourage you to obtain my articles dealing with how Paul abolished the commandments of eating "kosher" for Gentile, when Yeshua says just the opposite. Paul's influence was even so great that he influenced Peter to relax "clean and unclean" at the dinner table, thereby "becoming all things to all men that he might win some."**

**Answer for yourself: Sounds great doesn't it? But there is one problem. The men from James appear and rebuke Peter and Barnabas, and they repent, leave table fellowship, and move the church next door. This angers Paul and he lashes out at Peter and Barnabas.**

**Answer for yourself: We read the account from only Paul's perspective, but let me ask you, are we to sin in reaching others for Christ?**

**Before some men who had been sent by James arrived there, Peter had been eating with the Gentile brothers and relaxing "kosher" laws (included in both the Laws of Noah and the Mosaic Laws). But after these men arrived, he drew back and would not eat with the Gentiles, because he was afraid of those who had come representing James and the Jerusalem church (James was not the leader after Peter had to flee from prison). Now you can better understand Paul's response about the other Jewish brothers who also STARTED ACTING LIKE COWARDS ALONG WITH PETER; and even Barnabas was swept along by their cowardly action. (Galatians 2:1 1-13)**

**Attacking the competition in order to gain ascendancy is a tactic that is familiar to anyone who has ever watched a political campaign. In this instance, especially after going over Paul's varying accounts of his own alleged conversion, it would certainly be interesting to see Peter's version of the above story.**

**So, now Christ has stated that he wishes to have Peter lead the Christian church. Paul in turn has attacked Peter and has become the actual leader of the new church. The only rationale that Paul presents to back his authority is his own claim of personal revelation. This claim was examined in my past articles and was found to be rather questionable.**

**In fact, the very claim of apostleship for Paul is supported only by Paul's own story.**

**Answer for yourself: Could this be the reason Paul spends so much time in his writings trying to vindicate his apostleship to others who do not accept him or his credentials?**

**One of the best ways to examine this claim is to look at Paul's own defense of his use of this title. In this defense, Paul states his claim to the title of apostle and asserts that he is not being boastful.. It is up to the reader to decide whether or not the person making this defense (Paul) sounds like a true follower of Christ:**

**I, Paul, make a personal appeal to you—I who am said to be meek and mild when I am with you, but harsh with you when I am away. By the gentleness and kindness of Christ / beg you not to force me to be harsh when I come; for I am sure I can deal harshly with those who say that we act from worldly motives.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice his tone used toward other brothers in Christ?**

**It is true that we live In the world, but we do not fight from worldly motives. The weapons we use In our fight are not the world's weapons but God's powerful weapons, which we use to destroy strongholds We destroy false arguments; we pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God; we take every thought captive and make it obey Christ. And after you have proved your complete loyalty, we will be ready to punish any act of disloyalty....**

**Answer for yourself: Does this sound like Christ-likeness to you?**

**...You are looking at the outward appearance of things. Is there someone there who reckons himself to belong to Christ? Well let him think again about himself, be. cause we belong to Christ Just as much as he does. For I am not ashamed, even if I have boasted somewhat too much about authority that the Lord has given us—authority to build you up, not to tear you down. I do not want it to appear that I am trying to frighten you with my letters.**

**Of course we would not dare classify ourselves or compare ourselves with those who rate themselves so highly. How stupid they are! They make up their own standards to measure themselves**

**Or**

**by, and they Judge themselves by their own standards....**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that he is referring to James and Peter and the authorities of the Jerusalem church?**

**...1 wish you would tolerate me, even when I am a bit foolish. Please do! I am jealous for you, just as God is; you are like a pure virgin whom I have promised in marriage to one man only, Christ himself. I am afraid that your minds will be corrupted and that you will abandon your full and pure devotion to Christ—in the same way that Eve was deceived by the snake's clever lies. For you gladly tolerate anyone who comes to you and preaches a different Yeshua, not the one we preached; and you accept a spirit and a gospel completely different from the Spirit and the gospel you received from us!**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that this "different Yeshua" is the one preached by the Jerusalem church, one which never taught "faith alone," but rather espoused a message different from Paul; namely "faith in God and fruitful obedience to His Word both ethically and morally"?**

**Take time to request the articles on Paul's misquotations of the Old Testament Scriptures and the creation of a new religion, for in these articles I will show you repeatedly how passages given by God to Moses and the Prophets have been taken out of their rightful context time after time, and not longer applied by Paul whereby they refer to faith in God and therefore obedience to Him in an ethical and moral manner, but now applied to belief and faith in Paul's theology about Yeshua and who he is according to Paul. Totally lacking in Paul's**

**quotes is any hint of ethical and moral obedience which should be the fruit of one's faith in God?**

**I do not think that I am the least bit inferior to those very special so-called apostles of yours! Perhaps I am an amateur in speaking, but certainly not in knowledge; we have made this clear to you at all times and in all conditions.**

**Answer for yourself: Again, did you notice he is ridiculing Peter, James, and the authorities of the Jerusalem church?**

**I did not charge you a thing when I preached the Good News of God to you; I humbled myself in order to make you important. Was that wrong of me? While I was working among you, I was paid by other churches. I was robbing them, so to speak, in order to help you. And during the time I was with you I did not bother you for help when I needed money; the brothers who came from Macedonia brought me everything I needed. As in the past, so in the future: I will never be a burden to you! By Christ's truth in me, I promise that this boast of mine will not be silenced anywhere in all of Achaia. Do I say this because I don't love you? God knows I love you!**

**I will go on doing what I am doing now, in order to keep those other "apostles" from having any reason for boasting and saying that they work in the same way that we do. Those men are not true apostles— they are false apostles, who lie about their work and disguise themselves to look like real apostles of Christ. Well no wonder! Even Satan can disguise himself to look like an angel of light! So It Is no great thing It his servants disguise themselves to look like servants of righteousness. In the end they will get exactly what their actions deserve.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you just hear Paul call the original Apostles "false apostles'?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you just hear Paul call them "liars"?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you also just hear group the Apostles of the Jerusalem church with the works of Satan?**

**Answer for yourself: What theological differences between the Jerusalem church and Paul could have spawned such animosity by Paul for the one who was to establish Yeshua's church, let alone James, the lord's brother and head of the Church in Jerusalem? The answer is clear. Just read my articles and you will see for yourself that Paul's Yeshua is not the one God intends we know, love, and follow.**

***Early Christian writings indicate that these False apostles, as Paul calls them, were none other than St. James (the brother of Christ), St. Peter, and the other chosen apostles of Christ.***

**I repeat; *no one should think that I am a fool.* But if you do, at least accept me as a tool, just I will have a little to boast of. Of course what I am saying now is not what the Lord would have me say; in this matter of boasting I am really talking like a fool. But since there are so many who boast for merely human reasons, I will do the same.**

**Answer for yourself: Many believe that the New Testament is inspired, then if that be so, is the Holy Spirit sarcastic? Read on.**

***You yourselves are so wise, and so you gladly tolerate fools! You tolerate anyone who orders you around or takes advantage of you or traps you or looks down on you or slaps you in the face. I am ashamed to admit that we were too timid to do those things!***

**But it anyone dares to boast about something—I am talking like a fool—I will be just as daring. Are they Hebrews? So am 1. Are they Israelites? So am 1. Are they Christ's servants? I sound like a madman—but I am a better servant than they are! I have worked much harder, I have been In prison more times, I have been whipped much more, and I have been near death more often. Five times I was given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews; three times I was whipped by the Romans; and once I was stoned. I have been in three shipwrecks, and once I spent twenty-four hours in the water. In my many travels I have been in danger from floods and from robbers, in danger from fellow Jews and Gentiles; there have been dangers In the cities, dangers in the wilds, dangers on the high seas, and dangers from false friends. There has been work and toil; often I have gone without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty; I have often been without enough food, shelter, or clothing....**

**Answer for yourself: Do you detect a prideful response or is it just me?**

**...1 have to boast, even though it doesn't do any good. But I will now talk about visions and revelations given me by the Lord. I know a certain Christian man who fourteen years ago was snatched up to the highest heaven (I do not know whether this actually happened or whether it was a vision—only God knows), I repeat, I know that this man was snatched to Paradise (again, I do not know whether this actually happened or whether it was a vision—only God knows), and there he heard things which cannot be put into words, things that human lips may not speak. So I will boast about this man—but I will not boast about myself, except the things that show how weak I am. If I wanted to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be telling the truth. But I will not boast, because I do not want anyone to have a higher opinion of me than he has as a result of what he has seen me do and heard me say.**

**But to keep me from being puffed up with pride because of the many wonderful things I saw, I was given a painful physical ailment, which acts as Satan's messenger to beat me and keep me from being proud. Three times I prayed to the Lord about this and asked him to take n away. But his answer was; "My grace Is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, In order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. I am content with weaknesses, Insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

**I am acting like a fool—but you have made me do It. You are the ones who ought to show your approval of me.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see the desperate attempt to persuade others to think as highly of Paul as he thinks of himself?**

**For even if I am nothing, I am in no way inferior to those very special - apostles of yours. The many miracles and wonders that prove that I am an apostle were performed among you with much patience. How were you treated any worse than the other churches, except that I did not bother you for financial help? Please forgive me for being so unfair! (2 Corinthians 10:1-9,12; 11:1-27; 12:1-13)**

**Again it is up to the reader to judge the sincerity of this discourse, but I believe I have showed you two sides of an issue that might have escaped the casual reader of the New Testament. If you want to learn more about the "real Yeshua," let us know and we will be glad to provide for you material to help you study and guide your pursuit of the holiness of God and no longer be led by men's personal ambitions and visions. Shalom.**

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# THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS: AN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT THE GENTILE EXODUS FROM PAULINE CHRISTIANITY TO MOSAIC FAITH

**The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is unknown as is the community which he addressed. The work is not a letter. It seems if it were originally meant for oral presentation. The document is Hellenistic in its language and in its use of Hellenistic philosophy to interpret Jewish Scripture. Church tradition ascribes authorship to Paul but most reputable scholars instruct us that the internal evidences of the epistle reveal it written after Paul's death by a pro-Pauline disciple.**

**Hebrews reflects a general preoccupation of Christian writers in the late first century with demonstrating the supposed superiority of Pauline Christianity over Biblical Judaism. In reality such is not the case.**

**Scholars have labeled the Book of Hebrews as the most sustained case of early Christian writings against the continued validity of the Old Covenant. To make sure they translators of the Greek manuscripts have even added words to the Bible which are not in the originals and there are more internal errors in this document than any other New Testament work.**

**For example, the writers and later editors of the epistle have ingeniously added "covenant" in special places to reinforce their mistaken ideas that we are under a "new" and "replaced" covenant today when the original manuscripts do not contain such words or ideas. See our articles on the Second Priesthood or the Second Covenant and The New Re-Newed Covenant for an exhaustive study which will demonstrate to you conclusively that the covenant with Jesus was a re-affirmed and re-newed covenant and not a replaced covenant.**

**The book of Hebrews is written for one purpose and one purpose only; to help believers in Christ avoid a danger that is very real; namely, the desertion of Pauline Christianity for Mosaic faith, which many were doing in the first century when given all the facts. As Paul was constantly hounded by those of James and the Jerusalem church we find that his teachings were constantly being "untaught" by those who came after him in order to correct the errors of Paul and the misrepresentation of what Yeshua actually believed and taught. The arguments which the author-apostle put forth are a microcosm of Christological reasoning. For the author of the Book of Hebrews the abandonment of "the" brand of Gentile Christianity as taught by Paul is understood as apostasy which will bring dire punishment to those who reject or revert back to Moses and the Torah. This was a real problem for Paul as he confesses later:**

***2 Tim 1:15 15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; ... (KJV)***

**For the writer of the Book of Hebrews the whole difference between Christianity and Judaism could be seen in that the "new covenant" replaced the old one as Jesus and his faith supplanted Moses and the Law. To make sure we agree with such a false scenario, as stated earlier, words in italics have been added to your Bibles to make sure you understand that the "covenant" has passed away with Jesus and a new and replaced covenant made by Christ has taken its place. Such a premise can be shown to be full of errors once other parts of the Bible are consulted. The context of the passages in the book of Hebrews refers to the "priesthood" which was soon to pass away and not the Covenant but "covenant" has been added by the printers of your Bibles to ensure you adopt "their" theology. Read the text and look at the context and you can easily see that the "priesthood" and not "the covenant" is to soon vanish. The Temple was soon to be destroyed in 70 C.E. and with it the destruction of the priesthood but the Covenant is "eternal."**

***The writer of Hebrews, like Paul, quoted profusely from Hebrew Scriptures...but the altered ones! The book contains over one hundred quotations from the Septuagint text (Greek text) of the Hebrew Bible which is different from what is found in the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible).***

**Answer for yourself: Did you hear what I just said…that there are over 100 Hebrew Scriptures misquoted in the Book of Hebrews (THINK)?**

**The author began this document by saying God spoke in ancient times "to our forefathers" through the prophets and in the recent past had spoken "through the Son." He illustrated that God has now spoken through His Son by ascribing God's communication with David and Solomon as if it was to Jesus instead. If anyone is familiar with the context of the verses Paul or this Pauline writer uses we have a total deception.**

## THE MISUSE OF PSALMS 2:7 AND 2 SAM. 7:14

**In Heb. 1:5 the writer evoked Psalm 2:7 and 2 Sam. 7:14 as follows:**

***You are my Son. Today I have become your Father. I will be his Father and he will be my Son.***

**Contrary to how Paul used the passages, they originally were allegorical, reflecting the special relationship of God to the Jewish king on the throne of Israel and have no bearing on Jesus especially in light that Jesus never sat upon the throne of Israel. The king, upon his accession to power, was symbolically "begotten" as God's son when he ruled over His people. This is not meant to be literal as most Christians try to make it out to be. The passages were directed to kings of Israel. Although this passage was not relevant to Jesus who had never been of officially anointed and publicly acknowledged as king of Israel even though his actions upon entering Jerusalem gave the Romans the impression that he aspired to that role, we as followers of Jesus, if the account of his immersion is correct as we understand that God spoke from Heaven over him at his anointing at the Jordan, there there might be a hidden and possible secondary fulfillment. Only time will tell since the number of forged passages and alterations of the text of the New Testament, not to mention the purposeful mistranslation and misquotation of the Jewish Scriptures within it, make the whole thing suspect. The best we can hope for is an intelligent reading of the New Testament with a prior background of Biblical Judaism where we can witness to what we know to be true when reading the Biblical Judaism within it. When one becomes accomplished to understand both Gnosticism and Mystery Religions then it is easy to read the New Testament and filter out the paganism from the truth within it and then and only then can we capture truth concerning the Jewish Jesus. It is a shame but such is the condition of the document as inherited by us. It is the hope and faith of many that one day Yeshua will return and then be King over all Israel. But time will tell and when the true**

**Messiah appears.....it just might be he; but if not, we shall welcome he who comes in the name of the LORD. Shalom.**

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# PAUL AND THE NAZARENES...WHY DO THEIR MESSAGES CONFLICT WHEN THEY BOTH FOLLOWED JESUS?

**Paul's writings show a marked divergence from Pharisaic Judaism. Most Christians are not aware of this. Paul's writings also, not surprisingly, are different from the views of the Nazarenes or Jewish Christians who were the original followers of Yeshua. The people most closely associated with Yeshua in his life formed the nucleus of the Nazarene movement. The members of this group attended synagogue and considered themselves Jews. They were Nazarene Jews, just as others were Pharisaic Jews or Essene Jews. These first followers of Yeshua were opposed to Paul's arguments against the Torah and Jewish ceremonies and practices. Leading members of the Nazarenes were Peter and James, Yeshua's apostle and brother, respectively. The latter headed the Jerusalem Church or Council. In the Epistle of James the conflict between the Jewish Nazarene movement and Paul's Gentile Christianity came to the fore. James ridiculed the Pauline concept that faith can substitute for good deeds and actions.**

## YOU MISSED THE WAR

**The New Testament was written with a multiple agenda. The New Testament, in many places, down-plays the schism and split the constantly existed between Paul and the Jerusalem Church. But to those who know what they are looking far when reading the New Testament, internal evidences give away the break between Paul and the apostles who knew Yeshua best. The Book of Acts and the Epistle to the Galatians have several references to the growing conflict between Paul and James. Apparently Paul was summoned to Jerusalem to explain to the Jerusalem Council his reasons for abolishing the requirements of circumcision and dietary restrictions for Gentile converts. Galatians 3 also bears witness to the differences Paul had with Peter about dietary observance. Following this confrontation, there is no evidence that the two men ever again resumed contact or friendly relations.**

**There are other documents which were not included in the Catholic Bible in 380 C.E. which testify to Paul's alienation from the Nazarene sect. The Ebionites left literature which is contained in what is called, the Pseudo-Clementine Writings. They were preserved because they were falsely attributed to Pope Clement. Actually, the *core* of these writings is Jewish Christian or Ebionite stemming from second century Syria.**

**Inasmuch as the Ebionites were a direct link to the Jerusalem Church, and, therefore, to Yeshua, their records would seem to be of great historical value. The earliest writings of this sect were about two centuries prior to those of most of the Church Fathers and therefore, closer in time to Paul and Yeshua. The Church Father, Irenaeus, in his book *Against Heresies* attacked the Nazarenes as heretics under the name of Ebionites. The word Ebionites in Hebrew is *evyonim* which means poor people. It is another name by which the Nazarenes or Jewish Christians were called.**

**The Ebionite manuscripts cast light on Paul's life and provide much insight into his motivations, actions, and**

**doctrines. The Ebionites rejected Paul as an apostate from the Law who had perverted Yeshua's teachings by claiming that Yeshua had abrogated the Torah. Furthermore, they asserted, Paul had violated Nazarene beliefs by transforming Yeshua into a deity. In the Ebionite documents Peter accused Paul of spreading lies about him by saying he opposed the Torah. Peter also claimed that Paul knew nothing about Yeshua's teachings. This is not surprising I found since the Christian faith is not built off the Apostles and Prophets as was planned, but off the Council of Nicea in the fourth century. Biblical and historical ignorance has robbed most today of the critical and necessary tools necessary to correctly interpret the book called the Bible. The Pastors carry the most blame, but those who never study to show themselves approved come right behind. The contention between Paul and James and Peter, alluded to in the canonical books of the New Testament (Acts, Epistles to the Galatians and of James and Jude), is affirmed in the Ebionite documents.**

**In an Arabic document, discovered by Shlomo Pines, an Israeli scholar, the Ebionite allegiance to the Torah is reiterated as is their belief in Yeshua as a human prophet (and not a deity fashioned after the image of Osiris). It also expressed "strong opposition to Paul as the falsifier of Yeshua's teachings". This Arabic document is from the tenth century Pines was able to demonstrate that a section in it had been incorporated from a Jewish Christian source stemming from about the fifth century!**

**This accords well with views of contemporary scholars. The Book of Acts tried to patch over the differences between Peter and Paul and to show Peter as moving towards Paul's anti-Torah views. There really is no convincing proof that Peter, who was the apostle to the Jews, ever departed from the Nazarene position which held that Yeshua was a *human* Messiah and remained loyal to his Jewish faith.**

**The fourth century Church Father, Epiphanius, preserved the Ebionites' attack on Paul. Epiphanius quoted them as saying Paul was of Greek parentage, that he came to Jerusalem and fell in love with the daughter of the High Priest (a Sadducee…thus now you see why he was a Sadducees originally and why he persecuted the Pharisees and Nazarenes). For this reason he converted to Judaism. When he was rejected, he turned against circumcision, the Sabbath, and the Law. If there is any truth to this story repeated by Epiphanius two centuries after it was written by the Nazarenes (or Ebionites), it could explain many characteristics of Paul:**

- **His limited knowledge of the Torah**
- **His hostile statements about Jews and Judaism**
- **His affinity to, familiarity with, and greater comfort in working among, Gentiles which was definitely not a Jewish characteristic**
- **Paul's theology showed the influence of Hellenistic and prior pagan concepts and at the same time, a rejection of fundamental Jewish teaching. It is a mixture to say the least.**

**In his religious precepts Paul was no closer to the Nazarenes than he was to the Pharisees even though he recognized that his mission originally emanated from the former and he claimed in his letters that his roots were imbedded in the latter.**

**If you want more on this major problem connected with Paul I have done my homework and will see that you get the information you need in order to make necessary correction and repentance in your religious belief system. Such I can assure you is very pleasing to God who never desired Christians worship as they do. Shalom.**

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# PAUL AND THE CREATION OF A NEW RELIGION FOR THE GENTILES

**In a previous article we presented historical evidence from the Fourth Century historian Epiphanius detailing the rejection of Paul and his precepts by the Jews of the Jerusalem church (Peter, James, John, etc.). Paul's response was to turn his back on them and seek a more fertile field in which to sow his ideas. Thus Paul begins to take his message to the nations and Pauline-Gentile evangelism was born. So was another religion foreign to Yeshua.**

## PAUL'S GREAT SYNTHESIS AND THE CREATION OF A NEW RELIGION

**Paul contributed greatly to a synthesis of Judaism and Hellenism and thus the creation of Gentile Christianity. With his infusion of ideas from the mystery religions and mythology, Paul found himself at odds with the leaders of the Jerusalem Council. We showed you in a previous last article several references to literature yet existing which impugn Paul for his actions. Luckily for us the Catholic Church did not destroy all of such documents, for if they had been successful in removing all traces of documentation which reveals Paul's real standing with Yeshua's apostles, then we might have never known the truth about the views of the Jerusalem church toward Paul and his teachings.**

## HOW DID PAUL CREATE THIS NEW RELIGION?

- **1. Paul, having already built a very strong argument that he most likely was a Gentile, spoke to the Gentiles in their own language, literally and figuratively. He preserved familiar pagan beliefs in his writings and craftily blended them with Judaism, thus removing all the "stumbling blocks" or difficulties of Judaism for the Gentile believer.**
- **2. In Paul's brand of Biblical faith, called Gentile Christianity, the convert no longer had to fulfill the deeds and acts incumbent on Jews. According to Paul faith replaced the Torah. Belief in Yeshua's salvific death, resurrection, and divinity guaranteed entrance into heaven and life everlasting. The demands of the Law for specific observances and behavior in personal, family, and social file were revoked. When Paul's Galatian followers took him too literally and engaged in incest, the Apostle to the Gentiles backtracked and admonished them to refrain from such behavior, which is forbidden in the laws of the Torah.**
- **3. Under Paul' tutelage such inconveniences as refraining from work on the Sabbath, were abolished.**
- **4. Under Paul's tutelage the rite and commandment of circumcision was abolished for both Jews and Gentiles as well.**
- **5. Under Paul's tutelage the commandments requiring the abstaining from certain foods were abolished.**

- **6. An even more serious obstacle was removed: Judaism's pure, uncompromising monotheism which tolerated no other deity than Yahweh. The Pauline nature of God which included the perceptions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was a concession to the polytheism of the Gentile converts.**
- **7. Paul referred to Jesus as "Lord" or "the Lord Jesus", thus to the man Jesus were adjectives attached which formerly had been used only of divinity.**
- **8. Incarnation, also a pagan concept, was as familiar to Paul as to his proselytes and became part of Paul's New Adam doctrine.**
- **9. Judaism insists that a person is responsible for his own behavior and no one else's sacrificial death can exonerate him of his sins. Paul introduced into Christianity the idea of a sacrificing God who absolves a wrongdoer and brings salvation by means of the sinner's faith, not because of any effort or behavioral change on his part.**

**Consequently, for the reasons given above, a split grew between Judaism and Christianity. The one demanded observance of ethics and morality according to God's given Law and the other required a faith in Jesus that superseded the Law. The one offered salvation through deeds, the other, the grace of God through faith. "The Law ... is the strongest element of contention between Judaism and Christianity, for its existence spells the negation of Christianity and its abrogation, the negation of Judaism (Trude Weiss-Rosmarlin, Judaism and Christianity: The Differences, p. 97). For Jews, performing good deeds does not exclude their belief in God. It is NOT an "either-or" situation. Observance of the Law for many Jews is rooted in their faith in God. The paradox of Paul's assertion that he was a Jew was his denial of, and attack on, what Judaism holds most precious: the Torah.**

**This does not mean that keeping all 613 laws in the Torah is incumbent on all people. Paul did not have to found a new religion for Gentiles who sought salvation without accepting the whole Torah. Gentiles who could not or did not want to observe such laws as circumcision, dietary restrictions, ritual cleanliness, Sabbath and festival observances, and other regulations and ceremonies, could still be considered morally upright. In the Jewish tradition non-Jews are subject to the Seven Noachic Laws or Natural Law. They are prohibitions against blasphemy, idolatry, theft, murder, incest, and eating flesh torn from a living animal and the requirement to establish courts of justice. By observing these laws of Noah the righteous of all nations have a share in the world-to-come. This is the Jewish way of saying "Heaven," an expression which most approximates the Christian concept of salvation. Thus Judaism does not restrict salvation to its believers or followers of the Torah. People do not have to embrace Judaism to be deemed virtuous on this earth and worthy of the next world. Christianity, however, as a result of Paul's influence, has led many of it's adherents to the conviction that salvation is limited to those who believe in Yeshua's resurrection, messiahship, and divinity. Of course, this view is not shared by all Christians today, especially, not by those espousing liberal views of their religion.**

**As for the laws from which Paul had "freed" the people, Christians soon realized how important they are for the functioning of an orderly, ethical society. They also recognized the need or desire in people to observe rituals and ceremonies. From early on, Church leaders introduced laws which were both detailed and voluminous. They dealt with the organization of the Church and clergy, with rites and customs, and with matters of divinity and God's relation to people. Thus, Pauline Christianity fled from the bosom of Torah laws into the arms of ecclesiastical canon.**

**Paul's roots and upbringing made him familiar with the thinking and mentality of the people among whom he proselytized. This is not surprising since having previously shown he was most likely a Gentile himself. He was intimately acquainted with their prejudices, fears, and hopes and knew how to appeal to them. He seemed to know more about them than he did about his fellow-Pharisees and their faith and feelings. Among the Nazarenes in the Jerusalem Church he was an outsider. Not having been one of Yeshua's original disciples or a member of his family, Paul did not belong to the "old-boy network."**

**Beyond the borders of Judea the world had many more Gentiles than Jews. It has been estimated that Jews**

**constituted ten per cent of the population of the Roman Empire. Together with Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism, the extent of Jewish influence may have reached twenty per cent. Even with these numbers, the Hellenistic world held many more possibilities for Paul than the Jews did. More significantly, having come from that background, Paul was familiar with the people who lived in the Roman Hellenistic world of Greece and Asia Minor. He could identify with them and their beliefs and they could find in him a kindred spirit. Outside of Judea he was released from the constraints and dominance of a long established religion and its strictly monotheistic adherents. He was free to give vent to his imagination and creativity. He could formulate a new religion blending familiar and dearly-held ideas of the Gentiles with some monotheistic concepts which he could add for freshness and inspiration.**

**Although Paul claimed in one of his letters (2 COR 10), that some of his rivals criticized his rhetorical skills, he undoubtedly was blessed with great oratorical talent and power of persuasion which made him a formidable opponent in religious disputes. In that same letter and chapter he spoke of demolishing arguments against his beliefs. The Apostle's organizational ability is amply demonstrated by his having developed a new religion complete with infrastructure and followers.**

**Paul's constant travels and references to cities he had been to and planned to visit testify to his enormous energy. He was undaunted by the hazards of transportation in his time, and seems to have had no more hesitation or apprehension about undertaking an intercontinental journey than a jet traveler of today.**

**Paul's political acuity kept him safe from the even greater dangers of running afoul of the Roman authorities as he traversed the empire. Eventually, he did get into trouble with the Roman civil authorities who seized, questioned, and killed him because his success with Gentiles became a threat to them. But this did not happen before he had spread his message for a quarter of a century and laid down a firm foundation for the dissemination of his faith. Prior to his imprisonment, Paul managed to direct the religion he adopted so that it and he stayed on the right side of power. To accomplish his purpose, Paul used every artifice of diplomacy, not excluding expediency and duplicity. He told us this about himself in his first Epistle to the Corinthians:**

***Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I become like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I become like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I become like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I become weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men...(1 COR 9:19-22).***

**In these verses Paul's aptitude for political maneuvering is without question. However, his double-mindedness came to the fore in his dealings with the Jerusalem Council, the central authority for the followers of Jesus. In his letter to the Galatians Paul related that he delayed three years before going to Jerusalem to meet Peter and James, the leaders of the Council and Nazarene Church. On the surface it might seem strange that an apostle in the new faith would remain aloof from his co-religionists. Ostensibly, they were working toward the same objectives and were facing similar problems. It could be expected that Paul, as the new man on the job, would seek out the older members for support and advice. Instead he chose to work alone or with one or two apostles *of his choosing* whom he could influence and dominate. Paul was veering off on his own and setting up a new cult. Paul knew that his doctrines of faith and repudiation of the Torah for his converts were opposed by the men in Jerusalem. Paul did not want any interference or hindrance in building a base for his ideology. Nor did he wish to be subservient to the authorities in Judea or anywhere else. He wanted to be at the helm and in command.**

**Only when Paul had established his own missions in Asia Minor did he appear in Jerusalem; and then he came for a brief two weeks. He was less than forthright about the religious beliefs he was imparting to his converts. After that visit, Paul avoided Jerusalem and the Nazarene leadership for the next fourteen**

**years. Only after he had a large following did he confront the leaders of the Jerusalem Council again. He came with two apostles, one of whom was a Gentile, Titus who, he said, was not compelled to be circumcised. Paul had returned to Jerusalem in triumph. He had proven himself a powerful adversary. He had established many churches according to his doctrines and had numerous converts. He was received by the pillars of the Jerusalem Church as an equal. He said that they gave him "the right hand of fellowship," which meant that they realized his power, accomplishments, and authority; they could not impose their religious ideas on him. Although instructed by James to take letters with him containing the Jerusalem Council's ruling that the Gentiles coming to faith in God through the ministry of Jesus' disciples should observe and keep the Laws of Noah as well as strengthen the non-Jewish assemblies, Paul would do different when he again returned to Asia Minor. James instructed "as Moses is taught in every city on the Sabbath." He was full aware that the non-Jews would get the necessary instruction necessary to build a Godly life by the study of the books of Moses. Contrary to James' decree Paul will abrogate during his journeys much of Moses in his teachings to Gentiles after leaving James and the Jerusalem church as seen in Paul's defence in his Galatians letter where the Torah is called bondage and something that kills instead of brining life! Paul's imprisonment and execution by the Romans left the field wide open to the Jerusalem Church to spread its Jewish Christian doctrines. This continued until the outbreak of war in 66 C.E. which annihilated the ranks of the Nazarenes, as it did the Essenes. The Nazarenes fled to Perea in Trans- Jordan. The movement, understood as true Jewish Christianity where non-Jews were coming to God as Godfearers through faith in the God of Israel and observance of the Covenant and Laws of Noah, survived in weakened form until the fifth century. Under Roman Catholic pressure such a ministry and world wide effort was considered heretical by both Jews and Christians. Sadly, most of its members eventually joined Pauline Christianity after the Council of Nicea where the power of the Roman state propelled it's religious agenda as well.**

**The Nazarene leaders in Jerusalem sent evangelists to Egypt and Rome. They were either less active or less effective in the Gentile world than Paul for his brand of Christianity became dominant.**

**Perhaps Paul's most outstanding characteristic was Paul's driving ambition which fueled his other attributes. This overwhelming urge for achievement and success, combined with his skills, talents, and stamina made him invincible. Paul gave us an insight into his ambition and competitiveness in one of his letters. Explaining his background prior to his acceptance of Jesus in his Epistle to the Galatians, Paul wrote, "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age..." What a strange way to speak of a sacred calling like religion, especially by a man who has been considered a model of devoutness. Paul sounds more like a modern-day "Yuppie" discussing his profession or business. He put everything he had into it: his strength, his time, and his considerable talents. Like most successful people, Paul neither spared himself nor hesitated to use any means to achieve his goals. Even though his opponents in the Nazarene movement had the advantage of a direct link with Jesus and a clear monotheistic message,**

**Paul prevailed. His successors built a religious empire on his philosophy. His legacy lives on as Gentile Christianity today. Too bad the Jewish Christianity of Yeshua doesn't!**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

## *Many of the "tenants" of Paul's doctrine of salvation as contained in the New Testament have no precedent in Biblical Judaism or the Old Testament.*

That means that Yeshua, a Jew, and whom is believed by many to be Messiah, did not nor could not have ascribed to such pagan concepts as put forward by Paul. But most of you know little or nothing of what I say because you were brought up to accept unquestioningly the Pauline writings in the New Testament as if "inspired and God breathed." **I have found that to be very unwise over the years as my studies into the origins of Christianity went deeper. This is what you have failed to be taught or studied out for yourself.** In place of being a true follower of Yeshua by imitating him and letting his mind be in you, you have unwittingly let "another's" mind be in yours whereby you accept unknowingly a false salvation and will not be aware of such tragic consequences until you die. **It is with this hope that I present a detailed understanding of Paul's religious belief system with an emphasis upon his message of salvation.**

**I challenge all to read the evidence presented and refute it. Please don't quote the passages of Paul from the New Testament as this is the problem as demonstrated on other sites where the New Testament's origin has been put under the microscope and its unreliability for faith and practice demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubt once you are in possession of the facts:**

**http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua**

**http://bennoah1.freewebsites.com**

**http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com**

**http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com**

## *Please understand the problem is with the New Testament and what it presents as "truth".*

Quoting more New Testament passages only further justifies my claim in light of the background and evidence which can be uncovered by study in these areas. It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that you will come to know these truths better for yourself and turn to the Torah with complete faith whereby you begin to esteem and love what Paul would have you believe is a "curse"…the Torah. Just for the record in such study you will have the joy of learning the truth about a Jewish Jesus for the first time in your life. Craig M. Lyons M. Div.

- **Article no 1**

Iinvestigating paul's doctrine of salvation in the new testament

- **Article no 2**
- **Article no 3**
- **Article no 4**
- **Article no 5**
- **Article no 6**
- **Article no 7**
- **Article no 8**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #1

**If you are a traditional Christian this is possible the most important series of articles you may ever read in your life. As a Pastor I am deeply concerned for the state of the Christian believer, both in this life and the next. The whole purpose of a person becoming a Christian is that he desires to please God with his life. One attempts to follow the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament in that regard. One goes to church and models his religious belief system as well as his life after sermons he hears. Some even read and study the Bible to the best of their ability. But many are not advantaged to have at their disposal the necessary background knowledge, time, and finances necessary to approach the study of the Bible constructively. What the vast majority of Christian believers fail to recognize is that within the Bible, especially the New Testament, are many ideas totally foreign to what the Early Jerusalem Church believed. Even more much has been put forward in the New Testament which is totally foreign to what Yeshua both believed and practiced. Without such knowledge one only reads the New Testament trusting everything within it never aware that Yeshua could not believe much which is recorded within it.**

**This has been my experience as my studies over the last 20 years has scrutinized in-depth such areas within the Bible. The "Yeshua" you look to as a Godly example to be followed would shudder in your presence at much which is taught in his name or under his supposed sanction. Nothing could be further from the truth. I desire for you that you prosper spiritually. As a Pastor I desire that for you so much. But you are disadvantaged by what you don't know since your studies are deficient in many necessary areas which impact your religious belief system. I don't want anyone's money only their attention for in sharing with you such truths it is my hope your repentance in such areas will benefit not only you but your relationship with God as well.**

## IT IS TIME YOU BECOME AWARE OF THE ORIGIN FOR PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Most will approach such a subject without any idea that Paul's message of salvation as contained in the New Testament could be wrong. I did for many years. In Seminary we never learned about these things to which I will address in these articles in this series. They were never mentioned. It seemed everything was assumed to be correct because it was in a book that had been handed down for centuries by an organization which "deemed" it correct. Only over time in my pursuits for truth and knowledge about the God I loved did I "stumble" into such information. It was only by investigating "footnotes" in the many books I read over the years did I locate the hundreds of resources that contained such information which I somehow had managed to overlook in my years in Seminary and before. But lets be honest. No one person has the cumulative knowledge possessed in this world and "blind spots" are prevalent in many "religious belief systems". After tracking down such challenges to my religious belief system by scholars who knew better than I the facts to which I now address these articles, was I over time utterly convinced and startled at which I discovered. Paul's religious concepts as recorded in the**

**New Testament were almost a parallel to what the Gentile nations had possessed in their pagan religious beliefs since time began.** One could, if equipped with this knowledge, draw a continuous synthesis beginning with Sun worship by primordial man on to the current religions of the Gentiles of Paul's day. The facts and parallels with Pagan religions and Paul's doctrines were too numerous and unique to be left up to coincidence. Understanding finally that I had possessed "falsehoods" which were only "carried over" by the Gentiles who were responsible for the documents which comprised the New Testament which was canonized in the 4th century by the Gentile Roman Church, I quickly could see so clearly how much within Paul's doctrines and the New Testament was nothing more than the "same old things" rewritten with some Jewish terminology which was a clever attempt to "legitimize" what was being presented.

But let us never forget that these "tenants" of Paul's doctrine of salvation had no precedent in Biblical Judaism or the Old Testament. That means that Yeshua, a Jew, and whom is believed by many to be Messiah, did not nor could not have ascribed to such pagan concepts. This is what you have failed to be taught or studied out for yourself. In place of being a true follower of Yeshua by imitating him and letting his mind be in you, you have unwittingly let "another's" mind be in yours whereby you accept unknowingly a false salvation and will not be aware of such tragic consequences until you die. It is with this hope that I present a detailed understanding of Paul's religious belief system with an emphasis upon his message of salvation. I challenge all to read the evidence presented and refute it. But please don't quote more me more misguided New Testament scriptures for your authority for I know better and it is our hope at Bet Emet that you will come to know better for yourself and turn to the Torah with complete faith whereby you begin to esteem and love what Paul would have you believe is a "curse"…the Torah.

# PROV 3:1-4

- 1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:
- 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.
- 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:
- 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

**Now on with the second in this series. Shalom.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #2

**Answer for yourself: Have you personally investigated Paul's doctrine of salvation as contained in the New Testament as to its origin?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul's ideas concerning salvation and atonement are totally foreign to Biblical Judaism and cannot be traced to Sinai, the Law, the Prophets, or even to Yeshua's teachings?**

**Probably not! If you are like me since childhood I would read the New Testament and believe unquestioningly all that I read there. "For after all, it is in the Bible…isn't it?" For years I rested secure that since such was in the New Testament nothing could be in error. I never knew the origin for such beliefs and was continually reassured when reading the New Testament since I was told it was "inspired and God breathed". Then I went to Seminary and all the while there I was never informed that such doctrines of salvation as espoused by Paul found their origins in anti-semitic Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions. Somehow I never felt the need to investigate the origin for the salvation beliefs as taught in the New Testament. Being a typical zealous Christian at that time in my life I also had only a cursory familiarity with the Old Testament. For after all I was a New Testament Christian. Not being an authority in Old Testament studies, I "assumed" that the New Testament was the Old Testament "fulfilled"…for after all that is what I was taught.**

**Follow graduation and beginning my Pastorate I continued to use the skills I learned in Seminary to advance my knowledge of God. Over time in my pursuits for more knowledge of the God I loved I ran into many things that "challenged" my Protestant religious belief system. Wanting to justify myself before God as well as my conscience I used such "challenges" to provoke me to do further research into these areas to prove my beliefs in what the New Testament avowed was correct. The rest is history. Over the last twenty years much of my "religious belief system" as based upon New Testament passages has been shattered by undeniable facts and demonstrable evidence to the contrary. I had spent the majority of my life believing "lies" in place of "truth". I was ashamed and appalled because I had not searched out this before. But finally realized that it was grace of God that allowed me to see these things because for years I never knew we had such problems within the New Testament let alone with Paul's doctrine of salvation.**

***I hope to demonstrate to you beyond any shadow of doubt on these next pages that Paul's doctrine of "salvation" to which the vast majority of Christianity ascribes has its origin in Gentile gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions and has almost nothing in common with Yeshua's teachings or Biblical Judaism.***

**If you have the courage to read these articles then you will see for yourself that most of what Paul teaches concerning his doctrine of salvation originated with Gnosticism and the Pagan Mystery Religions of his day and has very little to do with Biblical Judaism and the faith held by Yeshua when he lived.**

**If you are honest most will say "no…I have not researched the origin of Paul's doctrine of salvation as to its origin". Most of you are where I was at years ago….one who read and accepted the New Testament without questioning anything that Paul said. One customarily, if he is a Christian, reads the New Testament unquestioningly. Most accept all that is said there by "faith"; for after all it is contained in a leather bound book called The Holy Bible. Few know the Old Testament well enough to spot the divergences of doctrine as contained in the New Testament. Let us never forget our God is the God "who changes not". Simply if you find "salvation doctrines" in the New Testament which contradicts what the God of Israel taught in the Old Testament you should be on alert and investigate the differences as well as their origins in the New Testament. As I said before few know the Old Testament well enough when reading the New Testament that such contradictions and conflicts stand out in their reading. We gloss over them with abandon never realizing that we have a "land mind" in the text. It is to these people I appeal to share with them necessary information in these areas which their study or lack of has failed to reveal.**

**But let us never forget Yeshua, for the Christian, is his model. It is Yeshua the Christian is to imitate and not Paul if Paul opposed Yeshua and what he taught. Again, if you knew the Old Testament of your Bibles well enough with the corresponding background and origin of doctrines you read in the New Testament, and can hold these in balance long enough to contrast and compare them, then you could see more easily of what I speak. As a Christian you look to Yeshua and not Paul as your "Savior" don't you? Then if you do, then let us examine the message of Paul that most Christians trust for their salvation and let us see if Paul's doctrine of salvation can be found in the Biblical Judaism of Yeshua or if we have to look to pagan anti-semitic Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions for such doctrines. The answers which will come from such scrutiny of Pauline doctrine will be possibly the most startling and alarming thing you ever discovered. Besides unsettling your Spirit it will hopefully bring your heart and head to repentance as you reevaluate your position before God in light of the information and knowledge you receive. It is time to humble ourselves and return to the faith of Yeshua which went into all the world whereby the true salvation message of God is again preached to every living creature.**

# QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ANSWER AS YOU READ THESE ARTICLES

1. **Can it be demonstrated that Paul borrowed ideas from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions for his concept of "Salvation" as contained in the New Testament?**
2. **If it can be shown that Paul did "reinvent" his salvation message from Pagan Mystery Religions as well as from Pagan Gnosticism, then what bearing will this have on your reevaluation of what you believe God wants you to know about His "true salvation"?**
3. **What parts of Paul's doctrine of salvation have their roots in Biblical Judaism and the religion which Yeshua believed and which were completely foreign to what Yeshua both believed and taught?**
4. **Will you continue to believe your current religious "salvation" belief system in the face of overwhelming evidence which reveals the pagan origins of such beliefs to which the Gentiles to whom Paul would appeal already believed?**

**In presenting this information my total desire is to inform you of the truth behind the Pauline doctrines within the New Testament. Understand that the Apostles and the Jerusalem Church had problems with Paul for good**

**reasons. There were reasons men from James would follow him and try to undo what he was teaching to the non-Jews in his many journeys. Let us be wise enough to understand that labeling such men from James and the Jerusalem Church as "judaizers" is nothing more than a ploy by the "opposite camp" who wished not to be in subjection to the Torah and the Commandments of God.**

**Now…get ready….Paul and his salvation message as you have never understood it before awaits your scrutiny. It is my hopes that this will awaken the Church to the true Gospel of Yeshua before it is too late.**

## WAS PAUL INFLUENCED BY GNOSTICISM AND MYSTERY RELIGIONS?

**The question of whether, or how far, Paul was influenced by the mystery religions has been much debated. The History-of Religions school of scholarship, including Richard Reitzenstein, Wilhelm Boussetand Rudolf Bultmann, were struck by similarities between Paul's doctrine of salvation and that of the mystery religions, and felt constrained to see an influence on Paul from this Hellenistic source.**

**But I want to be fair. Their view, however, has come under attack from many angles by Christians not willing to admit to the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Paul's doctrine, it was argued by ardent Christians, despite superficial similarities, differed fundamentally from that of the mystery religions. Some would even go so are to say that such elements of similarity that existed could have arisen from influence in the other direction: mystery religions might be influenced by Christianity. This very scenario was what I wanted to believe myself when "stumbling" onto this information. But in all fairness it can easily be proven that long before, even thousands of years before the advent of Christianity in the first century C.E. there existed such doctrines among pagan religions which would be "borrowed" by Paul for his doctrine of salvation. I will prove it to you in the following pages (http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com).**

**Again some Christian thinkers have argued that the doctrine of a dying-and-resurrected God could not be proved to have existed in mystery religion until after the advent of Christianity. To these I would recommend they study harder and read more accurately into the subjects they comment upon for such statements I have seen to be utterly false. There is no way when one honestly examines the evidence that such a scenario can be maintained. They are simply wrong. A good encyclopedia Britannica is an easy place to begin to prove such Christian arguments wrong.**

**Another line of argument from the Christian camp is that Paul's whole doctrine could be sufficiently explained as deriving from Jewish sources, though it was admitted that the latter might have been influenced by Hellenism. Thus even elements in Paul's thinking that came ultimately from Hellenism did not prove any immediate Hellenistic influence on Paul, and did not cast doubt on his account of himself as coming from a strictly Pharisee background.**

**Let us begin by considering the latter claim.**

## WAS JUDAISM THE ORIGIN FOR PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

**Answer for yourself: Can Paul's doctrine of salvation be derived from Jewish sources, either by way of direct derivation or of logical development, or is it something entirely new and unprecedented in relation to Judaism?**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul's doctrine of salvation was "entirely new and unprecedented in relation to Judaism" then was Paul's doctrine entirely his own creation, or were there non-Jewish, influences at work in it?**

**In order to answer the above questions let us summarize Paul's doctrine of salvation to make sure everyone**

**fully understands what it entails**

**Paul's doctrine of salvation may be summarized as follows. Mankind is in the grip of sin and Satan. This sorry state of affairs cannot be broken by any moral effort on the part of man, since his moral nature is too weak. Consequently, mankind is doomed to everlasting punishment. God, however, in his mercy, has provided a way of release by sending his divine Son into the world to suffer a cruel death, which atones for mankind's sin. By accepting this death with faith and thankfulness, mankind can *mystically share* in it and also share in the resurrection and immortality of the Son of God. Those who do not have faith in this concept and do not accept this doctrine, and persist in thinking that they can escape condemnation by their own moral efforts (guided by the Torah) are doomed to eternal damnation.**

# LET US EXAMINE THE PARTS TO THE ABOVE SALVATION DOCTRINE OF PAUL

## The myth contains the following elements:

- (1) the hopeless moral condition of mankind;
- (2) the descent of the divine saviour into a human body;
- (3) the violent death of the divine saviour;
- (4) the resurrection, immortality and divinity of the crucified Saviour;
- (5) the vicarious atonement effected by the divine death for those who have faith in its efficacy;
- (6) the promise of resurrection and immortality to devotees of the Saviour.

**Answer for yourself: Which of the above elements in Paul's doctrine of salvation are to be found in the Judaism of Paul's time or before?**

**Before we proceed with the next article I want you to use the above listing as a quiz. Test yourself at this point in your study. Answer the above question and keep the answer handy and compare it with what you learn as you continue to study these articles. I won't tell you now but we will deal in the forthcoming articles on each of these issues in depth. I know that many will believe at first all of the above are contained in the Old Testament and Biblical Judaism. If that is correct then you will have to also agree that Yeshua would have believed the same. But if it can be proven that the above are foreign to Biblical Judaism then it stands to reason that a Rabbi and expected Messiah would not adhere or agree with such Gentile pagan beliefs. Let us continue our investigation in the next article.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #3

## THE HOPELESS MORAL CONDITION OF MANKIND

**As described in the previous article the first tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation is that mankind is hoplessly corrupt morally and has no way to extricate himself from such a horrible condition. Paul's radically pessimistic view of man's unredeemed moral condition is expressed as follows:**

***I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do the right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self, I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily \members a different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law that is in my members, the law of sin. Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death? God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God! In a word, then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being, am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin….(Rom 7:14-8:1).***

**Boy I can remember that passage being quoted over and over in my church for years and even used it myself during the early years of my Pastorate. But that was before my intense study uncovered for me this passage is Gnostic through and through and has absolutely no affinity and connection to Old Testament faith or Scripture. In other words Yeshua would not have believed it and it goes completely opposite what is recorded in the New Testament as the teachings of Yeshua.**

**Back to Paul for a minute:** ***the conclusion of the matter is this: there is no condemnation for those who are united with Christ Jesus, because in Christ Jesus the life-giving law of the Spirit has set you free from the law of sin and death. What the law could never do, because our lower nature robbed it of all potency, God has done: by sending his own Son . . . (Rom.7. 14-8.1 )***

**The psychology expounded here is as follows. We are rational beings, but our reason only allows us to recognize what we ought to do, but we as humans are powerless to do it. Our actions are dictated by our bodily constitution, which impels us to sin. We are prisoners in our bodies, helplessly watching what our bodily nature (the 'law' of our bodies) dictates to our actions. The principle of our identity, which lies imprisoned in our bodies, is our spiritual nature (defined and governed by the 'law' of the Spirit), which can only be freed by outside divine intervention. This liberation has come about through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for those who become 'united' with him through faith in Paul's doctrine of atonement and salvation which he connects with a "cosmic savior". In case you are not aware this is the core beliefs of Gnosticism and not Judaism.**

**A recent school of thought argues that Paul intended his scheme of salvation through the death of Christ for**

**non-Jews ONLY, and regarded Jews as sufficiently converted by their own scheme of salvation through the Covenant of the Torah. I must point out that Judaism already provided a way of salvation for Gentiles without requiring them to become converted to Judaism, through full conversion to Judaism was regarded as an options, and this was always freely available to all Gentiles. Here it must be added that Paul's own practice shows us that he regarded the Torah as non-obligatory for Jews as well as Gentiles as seen in I Cor. 9:20-21:**

**1 Cor 9:20-21**

- **20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;**
- **21 To them (Gentiles) that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.**

**In this passage Paul speaks of gaining both "Jew and non-Jew" through his doctrine of salvation and adherence to his creedal beliefs. Paul speaks of the Gentile in v. 21 as "being without law" but this is a complete repudiation of Acts 15 and the Jerusalem Council which put its stamp of approval upon the Gentile's adherence to the Laws of Noah for "salvation" and acceptance within the Messianic Community of Israel. It seems Paul forgot this major doctrine of Old Testament and New Testament faith.**

**It is likewise clear that Paul, while he did not insist that Jews should abandon the practice of the Torah if they felt more comfortable with in (I Cor. 7:18-20),**

**1 Cor 7:18-20**

- **18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.**
- **19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.**
- **20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.**
- **…and he regarded the Torah and kosher laws as no longer obligatory for Jews as in the case of Peter in Gal. 2:11-14.**

**Gal 2:11-14**

- **11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.**
- **12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.**
- **13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.**
- **14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?**

**…and as actually forbidden to non-Jews as in Gal. 5:2**

**Gal 5:2**

- **2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.**

**The relegation of the Torah to the status of an optional extra or indulgence for Jews amounts to its complete**

**abrogation and annulment by Paul as a viable scheme of salvation. Even more, the contention of some that Paul did not seek the conversion of Jews to Christ, regarding his mission as to only Gentiles, is contradicted by many passages, including I Cor. 9:20…**

**1 Cor 9:20**

- **20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;**

**…and by Paul's continual practice of preaching in synagogues. Thus the traditional view that Paul intended the supersession of Judaism and the substitution of a new way of salvation for all, whether Gentiles or Jews, is correct.**

**Again I want to be honest and fair to the presentation of the evidence. There are some Christian scholars who say they have claimed to have found this whole conception (the powerless of mankind to alter his moral condition) in rabbinic Judaism. Paul's 'dilemma', it was claimed, was that of the typical Pharisee, desperately trying to fulfill the whole Law, and always aware of his failure, since the omission of even one precept will plunge him into damnation. Recent scholarship, however, has become increasingly aware that this is a caricature of Pharisaism, or at least of the rabbinic Judaism which was used by the earlier scholarship as providing information about Pharisaism too.**

**The truth of the matter is that Rabbinic Judaism has an entirely different psychology, not a hint of which is to be found in Paul's writings. In this, the human psyche contains both a 'good inclination' (yelper ha-tob) and an 'evil inclination' (yetzer ha-ra'), and man has the power not only to choose between them, but to transform the energies of the 'evil inclination' into good, with the guidance of the Torah. If a sin is committed, the remedy lies in repentance (a concept never mentioned by Paul, though it figures largely in Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic Gospels). The idea of the impossibility of doing good is directly opposed to the entire spirit of rabbinic Judaism, which, basing itself on Deut. 30.11-14**

**Deut 30:11-14**

- **11 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.**
- **12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?**
- **13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?**
- **14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.**

**As you can see Rabbinic Judaism regards virtue as within the capacity of ordinary people - and accordingly does not pitch its definition of virtue so impossibly high that it becomes beyond the reach of normal humanity (while still allowing for supererogatory aims for a minority). Nor does rabbinic Judaism equate the evil impulse with the body or the 'flesh', or regard the aim of religion as liberation from the body. It regards the body as an inseparable part of the personality, not as its prison, and bodily acts are regarded as the locus of righteousness and liberation from sin.**

**Since the effort to ground Paul's moral pessimism in rabbinic Judaism failed, new efforts were directed to ground it in pre-rabbinic Judaism. It has been argued by some that Pharisaism and rabbinic Judaism are by no means the same thing, and that it was a mistake to look for corroboration of Paul's attitudes in the post-Destruction rabbinic movement rather than in pre-Destruction literature such as the Pseudepigrapha and the Qumran literature. Here, it is argued, a moral pessimism and reliance on supernatural help similar to Paul's may be found.**

**Answer for yourself: But is this premise true…can we find Paul's doctrine of the moral hopelessness of mankind**

**in pre-Destruction literature such as the Pseudepigrapha and the Qumran literature? Is it to be found anywhere in Biblical Judaism…the religion of Yeshua?**

**The chief evidence adduced has been that of IV Ezra, particularly as there are grounds for belief that the author of this work, written in the first century, was a Pharisee. Passages such as the following, from IV Ezra, have been held to show a strong similarity to the moral pessimism of Paul in Romans:**

**For the first Adam, clothing himself with the evil heart, transgressed and was overcome; and likewise also all who were born of him. Thus the infirmity became inveterate; the Law indeed was in the heart of the people, but with the evil germ; so what was good departed and the evil remained. (IV Ezra 3.2122)**

**For the grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much fruit of unGodliness has it produced unto this time, and shall yet produce until the threshing-floor come! (IV Ezra 4.30-32)**

**And I answered and said: This is my first and last word; better had it been that the earth had not produced Adam, or else having produced him, (for thee) to have restrained him from sinning. For how does it profit us all that in the present we must live in grief and after death look for punishment? O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, the fall was not shine alone, but ours also who are thy descendants!**

**For how does it profit us that the eternal age is promised to us, whereas we have done the works that bring death? (IV Ezra 7.1 16-18)**

**Such passages, it is argued by Christian scholars no less, show the same sense of deep-seated and ingrainedness of sin within mankind, of the impossibility of moral regeneration by human effort, and of the irreversible consequences of Adam's sin, that are found in Paul. It is concluded, therefore, that these were characteristic of first-century Pharisaism (though not of second century rabbinism). The only difference is that Paul saw some escape from his dilemma, while the author of IV Ezra did not.**

**Seen in the context of the entire work, however, the similarity vanishes. The book of IV Ezra is modelled, to some extent, on the plan of the book of Job: here, it is Ezra who addresses a long complaint to God about his handling of the world. Unlike Job, however, Ezra's main complaint is not about God's injustice in awarding rewards and punishments, but in his deeper injustice in giving man a moral task without giving him the moral equipment to fulfill the task successfully. The final part of the book, spoken by an angel, gives the answer to Ezra's complaint. This answer contains three aspects: God's inscrutability, the coming eschaton which will put things right, and (most important for the comparison with Paul) a rebuttal of the charge of man's moral helplessness. In this section, the angel asserts unequivocally man's power of free will and his responsibility for his own actions (7.19-29, 70-74, 127-31). Thus the passages alledged to show similarity with Paul are actually there in the book to be refuted, and the book would be better described as anti-Pauline. Written in the wake of the Destruction, the writer had more cause than Paul for despair of human effort, yet he asserts its validity. The book does attest the existence of despairing views in the period, but the author, from a traditional Jewish standpoint, firmly quashes them. The same remarks apply to the attempted recruitment of II Baruch on the side of Pauline moral pessimism. Thus the alleged gulf between Pharisaism and rabbinic Judaism on this issue does not exist.**

**On a different tack, some writers have tried to show that Paul too does not, after all, rule out the possibility of human moral effort, but has the same blend of consciousness of human evil and acknowledgment of ultimate human responsibility as the author of IV Ezra. This line, if established, would also place Paul in first century Pharisaism. Thus, W.D. Davies (after describing the rabbinic doctrine of the yetzer ha-tob and the yetzer ha-ra`): 'When we compare such speculations with what Paul describes in Romans 7 the similarity is obvious. It is difficult not to believe that the Apostle is there describing his experience as a Jew suffering under the yetzer ha-ra'. There is, it is true, no exact equivalent in Romans 7 to the rabbinical idea of the yetzer ha-tob . . . ' Later, writing about the fall of Adam and Paul's doctrine of original sin, he writes, 'Nevertheless, every man fell because of his own sin as is clearly implied in Romans 7.' Davies' reasoning seems to be: Paul's references to**

**'the sin of the flesh' are equivalent to the rabbinical yetzer ha-ra'. Therefore the whole rabbinical doctrine of the struggle between the yetzerha-ra' and the yetzer ha-tob is implied, with its assertion of human freedom and responsibility, and denial of original sin. This is eisegesis with a vengeance. A passage which, on any dispassionate reading, is all about human helplessness in the face of sin has been turned into a declaration of human freedom, and is to count as such in further discussion. This kind of sleight of hand is all too prevalent in Pauline studies, in the writings of those unwilling to face the evidence of Paul's complete moral pessimism and its radical difference from the basic attitudes of Judaism, whether pre-Destruction or post-Destruction.**

# IN CONCLUSION

**One last though if I might.**

## *Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

**If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. Well if you read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom.**

**Now on to the next study in this series.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #4

## THE DESCENT OF A DIVINE SAVIOR INTO A HUMAN BODY

**As described in the previous articles the second tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation as recorded in the New Testament is that of the descent of the divine savior into a human body.**

**Paul states clearly in the New Testament his doctrine of the pre-existence of Yeshua as a supernatural being. The question of whether Paul went so far as to regard Yeshua as co-partner with God in the creation of the universe depends on whether Colossians is regarded as an authentic epistle of Paul, a question still being debated. Paul provides us with this doctrine in Col. I.16-17:**

***Col 1:16-17***

- ***16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:***
- ***17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.***

**As you can see there is little doubt that for Paul that Yeshua was pre-existent and equated with a supernatural status. If Colossians is in all actuality an authentic letter then again there is little doubt that Paul considered this "supernatural" Yeshua as having a pivotal role in the creation of the universe.**

**Also, the question of whether Paul regarded Yeshua as God depends on the problem of the punctuation of Romans 9.5.**

***Rom 9:5***

> ***5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.***

**It is ambiguous whether Paul is connecting Yeshua as God or blessing God for the appearance of Yeshua in this verse. One's theology will determine how he reads the verse. Most scholars agree, however, on stylistic grounds, that Paul is here calling Yeshua 'God', not inserting a sudden blessing of God the Father.**

**But certainly Paul ascribes divine status and pre-existence to Yeshua in I Cor. 8.6:**

***1 Cor 8:6***

*6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*

**Paul took a "subordinationist" view of Yeshua which would later be overruled by Catholic Church Councils and which would later be regarded as heretical, by which Yeshua was divine and preexistent (i.e. existed from all time before his descent into human form), but was an inferior deity to God the Father, though sharing with Him the work of creation, revelation and redemption.**

**For a fairly clear statement of this subordinationist view, one only need to read I Cor. 15.28:**

*1 Cor 15:28*

*28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

**It seems that Paul was too little of a systematic theologian to hold such a view in a consistent form, or to be worried about the problems his "doctrine' raised for the central belief of Biblical Judaism; namely for monotheism.**

# THE GNOSTICISM OF PAUL...THIS IS PAGANISM AND NOT JUDAISM

**The best explanation, however, of Paul's ability to believe in both a High God and a subordinate divine "Lord", without abandoning his belief in monotheism, is to be found in the influence of Gnosticism. For it is in Gnosticism that we find a monotheistic belief in a High God combined with a vast mythology of lower deities. If one reads only a little about Gnosticism he is quickly confronted with doctrines of emanation and pleroma, by which the lower deities all "proceed" or "emanate" (in the later Christian phrase) from the unknowable High God.**

**Answer for yourself: Does such a concept containing a High God and a divine subordinate "Lord" to be found in Biblical Judaism and the faith of Yeshua? No!**

**Answer for yourself: But what of the Jewish Kabballah?**

**The pleroma theory of the Kabbalah is here, of course, irrelevant, since it did not enter into Jewish mysticism until the Middle Ages and thus would not have be available for Paul to draw from his ideas of his doctrine of salvation.**

**Answer for yourself: But doesn't the Hebrew Bible speak of supernatural beings like angels who visit earth in "human form"?**

**Again we must make a distinction. Certainly, there are many instances in the Hebrew Bible of the descent of supernatural beings, i.e. angels, to earth, in human form (e.g. Judg. 13.16, where Manoah thinks the angels a human being, or the angels who came to deliver Lot, Gen. 19), in order to give some message or perform some task. But such angels play no continuing part in the story, but perform their commission and disappear. They have minor roles and parts to play. Paul's conception of Yeshua thus departs completely from the Jewish conception of heavenly visitors as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul's Yeshua is the main actor in the story, to whom all the human characters are subordinate. Instead of a human**

**story with occasional appearances of heavenly visitors in walk-on parts, we are concerned with a heavenly visitor whose story dwarfs in importance the human events of the time.**

***I found, as so will you if your study in these areas, that such a story has affinities with pagan myths and sun-worship, not with the Hebrew Bible.***

**I have encountered arguments by some, however, that Jewish conceptions of the End-time did contain the scenario of a central heavenly visitor, and that there is evidence of this in the Jewish apocalyptic literature.**

**Answer for yourself: How true is this assertion made by some Christian writers?**

**Again, we must make some distinctions. There were Jewish conceptions of the End-time in which the glorious appearance of a liberating angel played a part, though (contrary to the assertions of some scholars) this redeeming angel was never identified with the Messiah, who was always regarded as a human leader and never a Divine figure or a God or a "submissive lesser God". For example, in I Enoch, the figure of the Elect One has sometimes been identified as a Messiah-figure. This is an error, for the Messiah is mentioned elsewhere in the same work as a human personage quite distinct from the Elect One. The Elect One is an angel, whose status is carefully subordinated to God. Besides that there is no suggestion that he is destined to undergo death as an atoning figure. But nowhere in the Jewish writings do we find the idea of a heavenly power who descends into matter in order to perform a salvific act of humiliation and suffering. I said "nowhere"! This kind of figure, however, is characteristic of Gentile Gnosticism and not Biblical Judaism or Rabbinic Judaism. In other words Yeshua, being a Jew, would not have ascribed to such a doctrine. In some Gnostic writings, Seth himself is regarded in this light: he is not a mere human bearer of gnosis, but a high heavenly power who has self-sacrificingly adopted human shape in order to bring enslaved humans the means of spiritual liberation. Relevant too is the Gnostic figure of Eve, Norea or Sophia, the female heavenly power whose descent into matter, evil and humiliation causes her to combine the roles of "salvator and salvanda". I challenge you to seek out and read Ap. of John 24. 34-25.7. You only need to read accounts of Eve and Norea see Stroumsa (1984), pp. 42-61. For more information on the Sophia, see Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses, 30.**

## WISDOM...PERSONIFIED & THE SUFFERING SERVANT

**Here we must consider two figures in the Hebrew Bible who have often been identified as precursors of the Pauline conception of Yeshua: the figure of Wisdom, and the figure of the Suffering Servant. Again I want to be fair with the evidence I have seen. Some Christian commentators have made attempts to argue that the personified Wisdom of Proverbs and the inter-testamental writings were identified in Jewish thought with the Messiah, thus giving the Messiah divine status as at least an aspect of God. If this were true then this would be very important. This would make the claim of Yeshua's divine status intelligible in Jewish terms: as the Messiah, he was the embodiment and incarnation of the Wisdom of God. Granted, certain passages in Jewish literature seem to imply a descent of Wisdom to earth: e.g. "She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors" (Prov. 8.3). All this, however, as W.D. Davies has shown, is very vague and unconvincingly. In truth there is nothing to show that Wisdom was anything other than a poetic personification for the wisdom of God which is found in the Torah. "She", wisdom in the Torah, was never given concrete mythical status such as to make her either an object of worship or identifiable as that political, historical figure (in Jewish terms), the Messiah. But to use the word "incarnation" as some Christians do is dangerous and forces a concept upon the Torah again which is more pagan than Jewish. The Messiah in Judaism has always been understood in human terms. He is a man who lives and embodies Torah but was never to be understood as the descent of God into the flesh of a**

man through an incarnation. Such again is more closely connected with the pagan ideas of Gods who become men through the sexual union with women. Pagan religions are replete with "virgin births". This is completely opposite to the Hebrew accounts in Scripture of God opening the womb of barren women miraculously and bringing fertility to dead wombs. Again we are forced to acknowledge such ideas strictly as the offshoots of Gentile paganism with no antecedents in Biblical Judaism or the faith of Yeshua.

The Suffering Servant of Isaiah, on the other hand, is certainly an earthly figure, but there is no hint that he has descended from on high. **Christian exegesis has always made much of him as a prophecy of the crucified Christ, but,** as Jewish exegesis has pointed out, the actual passage refers to his sufferings and threatened death, but not to his actual death. On the contrary, the natural meaning of the passage is that he is rescued without undergoing death. There is no evidence that the passage has ever been understood in Jewish circles as referring to a heavenly visitor! **Interpretations in the Targum and later Jewish literature understand the figure of the Suffering Servant either as a human Messiah, or as the Jewish people personified in a corporate nature, or as both simultaneously.**

**Again in the spirit of honesty some Christian writers have attempted to find a link between Judaism and Paulinism by pointing to the translation of certain humans into angels or near-angels in some Jewish traditions (e.g. Elijah, Enoch, Moses, Melchizedek).** But this does not work either because in all these instances, however, are beside the point, since none of them is pre-existent. It is not a matter of the descent of a divine figure, but of the promotion of a deserving human to supernatural status after death, or in some cases before death. **This is, after all, merely a natural development of the idea that all righteous people achieve immortality: these especially righteous people achieve immortality plus. Out of all the literature searched for the idea of a pre-existent being, the only passage with any claim to consideration is in the Prayer of Joseph, which is extant only as a fragment quoted by Origen in his commentary on John. This appears to convey the idea that Jacob was the incarnation of an archangel called Israel.** It is much more likely, however, that the idea is the Platonic one that influenced later Jewish mysticism: that everything on earth is a reflection of something in heaven. Again this is a non-Jewish idea with no background in Biblical Judaism or the faith of Yeshua. **Thus Jacob is not the archangel Israel descended to earth; he is the earthly counterpart of the archangel Israel. This idea is more clearly expressed in Joseph and Asenath, 14, in the resemblance between Joseph and the angel who appears to Asenath. If this interpretation is correct, Jacob was no more an incarnation than everyone and everything else on earth. Indeed, the idea that all humanity is the incarnation of God is certainly a Jewish one, since it stems from the biblical statement that God breathed life into Adam (Gen. 2.7). This means that human life is of the substance of God, or divine. But to say that all humans are incarnate God by the mere fact of their normal bodily birth is to exclude the hypothesis that this applies only to certain individuals, who have descended especially from heaven to don human bodies.**

If you have followed the reasoning and the information presented, we are forced to conclude that the Pauline concept of Yeshua as a previous existent heavenly visitor to earth performing a salvific role in human form through humiliation is entirely alien to Judaism. It arises from the basic Pauline notion that rescue must come from above, since this earth and the moral nature of man are too corrupted to be saved by human effort. This is Gentile Gnosticism through and through and not Biblical Judaism. The descent into evil matter of a divine being is characteristically Hellenistic, being prominent in Gnosticism. It derives, in a mythical way, from Plato himself, and his conception of the Guardian who refrain from the pursuit of perfection and escape from matter in order to help lower mortals; and in the background of Plato we may discern Orphic and Indian (Hindu) ideas of the same kind .Judaism never developed such notions because it never regarded matter as evil. Again such ideas stem from Gnosticism and not Biblical Judaism!

# IN CONCLUSION

**One last though if I might.**

## *Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

**If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement". Well if you read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #5

## THE VIOLENT DEATH OF A DIVINE SAVIOR

**As described in the previous articles the third tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation as recorded in the New Testament is that of the violent death of a divine savior.**

**The New Testament itself endeavors to find a Jewish background for the idea of the violent death of the Messiah by grounding it in the prophecies of the Hebrew Bible. Thus John 19.37 quotes Zechariah 12.10, 'They shall look on him whom they pierced,' as a prophecy of the execution of Yeshua.**

## BEFORE WE PROCEED...WE MUST COMPARE ZECH 12:10 IN BOTH THE HEBREW BIBLE AND IT'S DIFFERENT RENDERING IN THE GREEK BIBLE

**Most Christians will recognize the above verse from Zechariah 12:10 which is quoted by John 19:37. There is only one major problem you need to know: The Hebrew Masoretic Text as taken for the JPS Jewish Tanakh and the Stone Edition Tanakh (the Jewish Bible) does not "say" what is recorded in the New Testament as a supposed "quote" or "translation". If you have a Jewish Bible you only need to compare for yourself and ask yourself: "Isn't the Christian Old Testament supposed to be translated the same as the Jewish Old Testament since is comes from there?**

**I don't have the space to get into it here but on this website is a detailed examination and comparison of the Hebrew text of Zechariah 12:10 as compared with how the text was changed in the Greek Septuagint and later English translations of the Old Testament. This is a very important issue which the believing Christian needs to address. You need to understand that if this text as recorded in the Greek and English Bibles can be shown to be "creative fiction", and it can, then building a doctrine of the violent death of a Divine Savior, as taken from this verse for instance, is totally flawed. See the article.**

## SOME RABBIS CONFUSE THE ISSUE...WHY?

**Again in all fairness I must acknowledge to you that indeed a few rabbis of later years (after the destruction of the Temple) also explained this verse in a somewhat similar way when they said that it referred to the death of the 'Messiah son of Joseph' (b. Sukkah 52a). But we must understand that following the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. and the scattering of the Jewish race then many generations of Jews would grow up in non-Jewish countries where Hebrew was a dying language. It was not too long before these Jews could no longer read Hebrew or have access to Hebrew Bibles. They were forced to read**

the Greek Old Testament and it would be in this corrupted translation that many passages like Zech. 12:10 had been altered and these Jews no longer knew it because they had no Hebrew to compare against. It is just that simple. Thus they, like you, read what they had and what they "believed" was the incorruptible Word of God unsuspectingly. They, like many of us, read the Greek Bible believing all that was written was "inspired" Such was not the case however.

As if failure to maintain and read the Jewish Scriptures in Hebrew was not problematic enough, some rabbis stated that this Zech 12:10 passage in the Septuagint was a reference to a tradition that there would be two Messiah-figures, one descended from Joseph and the other descended from David, of the tribe of Judah. These few rabbis taught that "the Messiah son of Joseph" would be killed in an apocalyptic battle. As a Christian take notice that the "dying Messiah" was to die in an eschatological battle at the end of time. This surely does not fit the life of Yeshua. These rabbis also maintained that "the Messiah son of David" would then be successful in establishing a messianic kingdom throughout the world following the judging of the Gentile Nations which had persecuted Israel for thousands of years. Again this does not fit the life of Yeshua. So these rabbis were wrong in their understanding concerning the Messiah. But again these are late ideas that surfaced only after the destruction of the Temple. This tradition appears to be an attempt to reconcile different streams of tradition about the Last Days deriving from the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms.

Of major importance for the Christian believer is that these Messiahs of post-destruction Judaism are purely human figures and never were connected with the idea of a Divine Dying and Sacrificial Messiah. The death of the Messiah son of Joseph, a non-sacrificial death in battle, carries no connotations of supernaturalism. The Messiah son of David, who brings salvation in a political sense, does not die, except eventually of old age. This you need to know before you try to draw parallels to the death of Yeshua and claim that the rabbis prophesied of a dying Messiah. Let us be honest about what they said and not put words in their mouths they never spoke. One "Messiah" was to die NOT as a "sacrifice" and the other of "natural causes". Remember they were both believed to be "mortals" and not Divine Immortals. This has major implications for the Christology of the Christian Church which denies the total humanity of the Messiah

# PAUL'S CONCEPTS OF THE DEATH OF YESHUA IS TOTALLY FOREIGN TO JUDAISM'S IDEAS CONCERNING MESSIAH OR HIS DEATH

But the Pauline conception of the death of the Messiah, or Christ, is totally removed from Jewish conceptions, since it involves the death of a heavenly visitor and not a moral human being.

***The notion of a supernatural being entering human flesh, in which he suffers a violent death, is nowhere to be found in Jewish sources.***

**Yet not to be found in Biblical Judaism or Sinai faith, this is really Paul's central concept. It is strange that those who are concerned to argue that Paul's ideas all have their roots in Judaism never seem to feel the need to argue for a Jewish origin of this central concept of a supernatural being who entered human flesh. It seems that this is overlooked as if it were a merely historical event rather than an important mythological theme. That Yeshua died on a Roman cross is undoubtedly an historical event; but we are concerned with the mythological use made of this event, particularly by Paul, and in this mythological context,** Paul's characterization of the death of Yeshua as Messiah invites comparison with deaths of supernatural beings in other mythologies and other Pagan Mystery Religions. Our first point must be that in the Jewish mythology it has no equivalent. The Christian needs to know this!

***The idea that gods can die, and can sometimes die violently, is a commonplace in pagan mythology and is not to be found at all in Biblical Judaism. It contrasts profoundly with the Jewish concept of an undying and an aternal God.***

**The dying and rising gods of paganism correspond to a cyclic conception of life. Since nature shows continual death and rebirth, and the pagan gods are part of nature, we should expect a pattern of death and rebirth in them too. The God of Judaism, however, is not part of nature, but its Creator. He stands above and apart from the cycle of the seasons, which continues to operate not by affinity to him, but by the fiat and guarantee of his word (Gen. 8.22).**

## PAUL'S SUBJUGATION OF YESHUA TO YHWH

**Paul, however, did not identify or equate Yeshua with the God of the Hebrew Bible, but thought of him as a somewhat lower deity, whom he called the 'Lord'. This subjugation of "lesser deities" to "greater deities" is uniquely characteristic of Gnosticism. Nevertheless, Paul thought of Yeshua as much superior to the angels. Indeed, every Christian who was saved was superior to the angels, and would 'judge' them (I Cor. 6.2). This conception is very similar to that of Gnosticism, in which the Gnostic elect would rise to the status of the higher powers of the pleroma, and be superior to the Demiurge (the term Gnostics used for the God of creation) and his associated supernatural powers. Such beings could very well be thought of as gods, since they had powers and knowledge far above that of mere angels. Paul's conception that one of the higher powers, Christ, descended to earth to suffer death is thus not quite so far removed from Judaism as the later Christian conception that made Yeshua part of a triune Godhead, and equal partner with God the Father. Even in this later conception, however, the impassibility of God the Father himself was somehow preserved by insulating him from the suffering of the Christ (except in the heretical Patripassian doctrine).**

**Thus it would not be an adequate derivation of the death of Christ from Judaism to point to the fact that, in some Jewish traditions, angels are not immortal. Indeed, according to rabbinic opinion, most angels perish as soon as their commission has been fulfilled (Gen.R.s. 50). Such angels are little more than hypostatizations of the commissions themselves. Even those angels who have achieved full personality and even individual names may be obliterated by God at any time he wishes. In rabbinic opinion, angels are more powerful than human beings, but spiritually inferior, being without the power of moral choice. Thus, while in Gnosticism and Paulinism human beings may become greater than angels when liberated from the flesh, in rabbinic Judaism, human beings are already greater than angels, precisely because, being in the flesh, they have the power to overcome bodily temptation; also, the very fact that humans are in the flesh gives them opportunities for the service of God that are denied to angels. In Judaism, however, angels could succumb to temptation and thus become fallen angels or devils. In all circumstances, however, their deaths were those of created beings, not of gods, and cannot be compared with those of either pagan gods or the Paulinist Christ.**

**Answer for yourself: Where then can we find the antecedents of the death of Christ?**

**Well, there is no sufficient analogue in Gnosticism, because here the body is of no real significance. We have to look for embodied deities whose bodies form an important part of their personalities, so that when the body is tortured and killed, this is indeed a cosmic event, not, as in Gnosticism, a matter of indifference. A satisfactory analogue to the Pauline account of the death of his Christ can be found only in the mystery religions. Here we find again and again the violent death of a saviour deity: a death that is experienced in its full agony and that has cosmic significance.**

**Dionysus is torn to pieces by the Titans; Osiris is dismembered by Set; Adonis is gored to death by a divinely-sent boar; Attis, afflicted by a divinely-sent madness, kills himself by castration; Orpheus is torn to pieces by Maenads. All these figures, and more, are the centres of rites in which their deaths are rehearsed for some**

**salvific purpose.** Nowhere in Judaism can we find such figures though we can discern them in the pagan background of the Hebrew Bible. Thus Isaac appears to be heading for such a fate, but the sacrifice is cancelled. **No doubt in the earlier story from which the Bible version was edited, Isaac did suffer death, and then experienced a resurrection and divinization, as a recently discovered Midrashic fragment indicates.** But the Hebrew Bible resolutely turns its face against such a version, since its doctrine is that only the One God can save; He forbids human sacrifice, whether actual or notional, and endures no other deities or mythologies as His rival. In the figure of the Pauline Christ, however, we find a reversion to the pagan cults and their religious beliefs which were outlawed by the Hebrew Bible, and a new violently-dying saviour emerges from Paul's theology. The lack of this knowledge that the death of Christ as characterized by Paul in only the "reinvention" of the pagan's rising and dying god myths is solely due to the lack of scholarship and study on the part of the vast multitudes of Christians who lack the zeal to study such issues.

## IS THE VICTIM ALREADY GOD OR DID THE VIOLENT DEATH CONFER DIVINE STATUS?

**Now we must turn our attention to the question of whether, in the mystery cults, the victim is already a god, or only becomes one through his violent death.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the pre-existence of the Pauline Christ as a high supernatural power echoed in the victim-figures of the mystery cults?**

At first sight, the answer is that the mystery cult victims are not pre-existent gods, but mortals who only achieve divine status through their deaths. **This is certainly true of Attis, Adonis and Orpheus. But in all fairness we encounter some variation in other "pagan gods" where we find a** mixture of "pre-existence" linked with "mortality". **Dionysus and Osiris are more undecided figures, having elements of pre-existence and also of mortality. Notice the mixture of Divine and humanity in Dionysus who has one divine parent, and one human parent; Osiris is a human king of Egypt, but may have descended from on high. Indeed, this uncertain status is characteristic of mystery cult saviours. Even Attis, Adonis and Orpheus have some peripheral features of preexistent divinity** The reason is that their sacrifice must be a real one; a Gnostic abandonment of an unreal shell of a body would have no sacrificial efficacy. **On the other hand, someone who becomes a god must have some special quality that fits him for such a role, some affinity for godhood. The necessity for human status may be explained as deriving from a prehistoric background of the mystery cults in rites of human sacrifice; or, alternatively, if one adopts the rites-of-passage theory of the mysteries (as argued by Jane Harrison), as deriving from the initiation-ceremony of a human adolescent. But whichever explanation we adopt,** both human and divine quality are required, **and this creates the problem of when the transition takes place. The near-ideal solution is that the victim is of demi-god status when born, having a human mother and a divine father. This prepare him for the agon through which he becomes fully divine, without reducing the reality of the sacrifice.**

Paul, the pioneer of the fusion between Gnosticism and mystery religion in his presentation of Yeshua in the New Testament. **Paul gives Yeshua full pre-existent status, and this creates many problems in theology for later generations, and paves the way for the Docetic heresies.** The problem is how to conceive of a supernatural power who dons a human body without ceasing to be god-like. **If he retains self-awareness as supernatural, his suffering in the flesh lacks full reality, since his body is a receptacle rather than an integral part of his personality; here we see the germ of theories of kenosis. The Gospels inherit this problem from Paul and deal with it in different ways.** The Synoptic Gospels, on the whole, reject Paul's doctrine of pre-existence and move the story into a fuller mystery religion dimension. **The trappings of a mystery religion passion play are presented: the birth from one divine parent, the triumphal entry, the betrayal by a colleague, the donning of royal robes, the ritual scourging, the mourning by a concourse of women - all elements lacking in Paul. Only the acosmism (the world is essentially evil) and moral pessimism by which**

**Yeshua is presented, like a Gnostic visitant, as surrounded by malice and incomprehension, derives from Gnosticism. In the Fourth Gospel, however, Pauline Gnosticism triumphs. Yeshua has become a preexistent power of the pleroma again, and his death hovers on the border of Docetism, which the author has to ward off' by polemicism, since even he is anxious to preserve the reality of the sacrifice.**

# THE SACRAMENTAL MEAL WITH GOD

**Here we must also give attention to the sacramental communion meal that features in every mystery religion. This meal, represented in Pauline Christianity by the Lord's Supper (later re-named the eucharist), involves eating the body of the god who has died the violent death, so acquiring his divinity and immortality. This meal is relevant to our enquiry about the pre-existence of the god. For the communion meal harks back to an earlier pagan stage in religion when an animal was torn to pieces and eaten raw in community in order to transfer its mana to the tribe. In this earlier form of the mystery rite (traces of which still linger in the later, more sophisticated and spiritualized rites), the dead animal did not become divinized by its death. It was because it was already divinized, by the possession of mana, that the rite took place at all. This pre-sacrificial stage (where the victim is killed for its own sake, not as a propitiation of a higher deity) contributes a primitive element of pre-existence to mystery deities even when their myth insists that they were born as humans.**

**It is often said that the sacrificial death of Yeshua has Jewish antecedents in the Jewish sacrificial cult, i.e. the animal sacrifices of the Temple. This argument is found in the New Testament itself, especially in the post-Pauline Epistle to the Hebrews, but also in Paul's own comparison of Yeshua with the paschal lamb (I Cor. 5.7). The idea that the sacrifice of Yeshua is the 'fulfillment' of the Jewish sacrificial cult is indeed ingrained in Christian thinking of all periods, but it is totally invalid. Elementary but fundamental distinctions need to be made between animal sacrifices and the sacrifice of a man-god. These two forms of sacrifice belong to two different worlds, and two profoundly different theories of sacrifice. In Judaism, in both biblical and rabbinic thinking, *animal sacrifices were not salvific.* Their function was to effect a final 'cleansing' (kapparah) for sin; not in the sense of removing sin itself, which could be removed only by repentance and reparation, but in the sense of making friends with God and restoring good relations with him after the breach caused by a sin. It was a meal shared with God to signalize the resumption of favor and friendship. *Thus, according to the rabbis, sacrifice never atones for deliberate sin, only for unwitting sin ( b. Shabb. 70a).* In the case of deliberate sin, repentance and reparation to the injured party (Lev. 6.1-7) have the effect of turning a deliberate sin into an unwitting sin, which then requires the final kapparah of sacrifice.**

**In Pauline Christianity, however, the sacrifice of Yeshua atones for sin in a much more direct way; the sacrificed person (Yeshua) suffers the death deserved by the sinner. This is a throwback to the kind of pagan sacrifice that Judaism rejected. It is not the 'fulfillment' of the Jewish sacrificial cult, but a return to pre-Jewish notions of sacrifice. And Christianity, since they know so little about Judaism, misses this very important point of difference between sacrificial offerings and the death of Yeshua. If you wish to see this for yourself I suggest Keil/ Delitzch Old Test Commentaries by Christians no less. It is excellent.**

**This is not to deny, of course, that considerable change and development in attitudes to sacrifice is reflected in the Hebrew Bible. In the very earliest stratum, preceding the composition of the Bible, we can detect the practice of human sacrifice, as mentioned above in connection with Isaac. When human sacrifice was banned and regarded as an abomination, as in the denunciations of Jeremiah, animal sacrifice, which took its place, was regarded at first as a vicarious atonement; this stage appears in the ritual of the Day of Atonement. Later strata of the Hebrew Bible, however, abandon the notion of vicarious atonement and substitute the idea of a shared meal of friendship and reconciliation with God through repentance, confession, prayer, almsgiving, and restitution. This development in the direction of rationality and human**

**responsibility is abandoned, however, in Pauline Christianity, which returns to the primitive level of vicarious atonement through a human-divine sacrifice. Understand that the Bible is a progressive revelation and if one charts the move of God He moves away from animal sacrifices saying He desires mercy and not sacrifice. This is the sacrifice of one's heart to God and not his animal. That is why God always provided atonement to Israel even when in captivity when they no longer had the aid of the Temple. Israel was never without a sacrifice. Christians are not aware of this since so few really know the Old Testament.**

**In answer to our question of the influence of Judaism on Paul, we might answer that there is such an influence, but only in the form of Paul reverting to primitive Judaism. Paul responds to the Hebrew Bible, which he read in the Greek of the Septuagint, by reading back into it attitudes which it had outgrown, but vestiges of which remained in the text. Paul, in a way, sees, like a modern anthropologist, the primitive background from which the sophisticated editors of the Hebrew Bible and its Jewish commentators were trying to escape, and proceeds to assert it as the true meaning of the text. But he is enabled to do this because of the influence of contemporary pagan cults which retained as a living reality the concepts found as dead vestiges in the most primitive layer of the Hebrew Bible.**

**To better acquaint yourself with the ideas expressed in the Old Testament concerning forgiveness and atonement I suggest you read our web page on these issues entitled: The Death Of Yeshua...What Did It Actually Accomplish...to be found at: http://faithofyeshua.faithweb.com**

# IN CONCLUSION

**One last though if I might.**

**Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.**

**If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. Well if you read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom**

**On to the next article.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #6

## THE RESURRECTION, IMMORTALITY, AND DIVINITY OF A CRUCIFIED SAVIOR

**As described in the previous articles the next tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation as recorded in the New Testament is that of the resurrection, immortality and divinity of the crucified savior.**

**Since the death of Christ, in Paul's religious belief system, is a sacrificial one, atoning for the sins of mankind and conferring immortality on those who believe, it is necessarily followed by a resurrection, with which the divine being, having suffered in earth existence, overcomes mortality and resumes his previous place as the greatest supernatural power under the High Father God. Paul does not show any concern about a bodily resurrection for Yeshua, such as we find in the Fourth Gospel: his resurrected Yeshua is seen by various witnesses, but does not demonstrate corporeality, as to doubting Thomas (John 20.27). On the contrary, Yeshua has a 'body of glory' (Phil. 3.21). It seems, then, that even after his resurrection and ascent to Heaven, Yeshua has a body, but a glorious one; this distinguishes him from God the Father, who is bodiless, and confirms Yeshua's status as a power or emanation inferior to the Highest God.**

**Since there is no precedent in Judaism for a deity who dies, there can be no precedent for a deity who is resurrected. Yet some writers seek to find a Jewish precedent for the resurrection and translation of Yeshua in such figures as Enoch and Elijah, who ascended to heaven and assumed angelic or near-angelic status. We have already considered these figures in relation to the divine descent, and seen that they provide no precedent for that concept.**

**Answer for yourself: But are they relevant, instead, to the divine ascent?**

**Answer for yourself: Can we see in the bodily ascent to heaven of Enoch, Elijah and others a Jewish foreshadowing of the bodily ascent of Christ, as envisaged by Paul?**

**It has to be said that the resurrection of a divine, pre-existent, incarnate figure after a violent death is very different from the ascension to heaven of a human figure while still alive or after dying of old age. Anthropologists have become very wary of superficial parallels between cultures, where the contexts within which the apparent parallels are embedded are significantly different. Yet this kind of snatching at fleeting parallels is still the rule in comparative study of Judaism and Christianity. Here the difference is between a salvific death, followed by the return of the descended saviour to his own vacated heavenly place, and a righteous death, for which the reward is a high place in heaven. These two themes are not only different, but reflect entirely different theologies. One tells us, 'Do not despair because of your helplessness; help will come from above.' The other tells us, 'Your own efforts can achieve**

**much; some people, through their own virtuous efforts, have even reached heaven.'**

**The matter is complicated, however, by the survival of pre-Pauline concepts of resurrection in Paul's own writings and also in the Gospels. The doctrine of resurrection was, of course, familiar to Jews, especially Pharisees, as a promise of reward to all deserving humans, whether Jewish or non-Jewish. The death and resurrection of Yeshua could be regarded not as a divine sacrifice, but as simply a miracle. Yeshua's return to bodily life was like the resurrection of Lazarus, though more important because of its eschatological significance; it was the first of many resurrections which would now happen in accordance with the prophecy of Daniel 12:2 about the Last Days. Paul refers to this Jewish concept and prophecy when he calls Yeshua 'the first Fruits of them that slept (I Cor.15:20); but his main theory makes Yeshua's resurrection unique in its salvific power, not merely the earliest of a plentiful crop. The Jerusalem church no doubt saw Yeshua's resurrection in a Jewish way as heralding the general resurrection of the righteous of the past. But if Yeshua was not just a righteous man, but an incarnate deity, his resurrection takes on a totally different meaning for which it is vain to look for a Jewish parallel.**

# SO WHERE DID PAUL GET HIS IDEAS FOR THE RESURRECTION OF AN INCARNATED DEITY?

**Answer for yourself: Since we cannot find the resurrection of incarnated deity within the Jewish Scriptures, then are there any forerunners to which we can look for parallels to Paul's thoughts in these areas?**

**We must look for a parallel in Gentile pagan religions which had the concept of the salvific death and resurrection of a deity. But let us not forget what we have learned about Paul from the Ebionite writings; namely, that he was a Gentile to begin with who was brought up in such a city where such religious concepts had been paramount. The mere fact that Judaism also had a doctrine containing the word 'resurrection', but which referred to humans not to deities, does not provide any adequate derivation. It only means that in this, as in so many other cases, a Jewish word has been given a non-Jewish meaning (prominent examples are the words 'Christ' and 'eucharist').**

**For the resurrection of a deity after a violent death, we must look again to the mystery religions. Dionysus, torn to pieces by the Titans, is brought to life again by Rhea. Adonis, killed by a boar, is raised on the third day. Baal, killed by Mot, comes back to life. Attis, after dying of his wounds, comes back to life and dances. Osiris, after being dismembered by Set, is put together again and revived, after which he becomes a god. In Mithraism, the bull killed by Mithras was not itself resurrected, but it provided life, through its body and blood, for the whole created universe.**

**Recently, however, scepticism has been expressed about whether any of the above-mentioned figures can really be understood as dying-and-rising gods, as in the formulations of earlier anthropologists, especially J.G. Frazer and Jane Harrison. Jonathan Z. Smith writes, 'All the deities that have been identified as belonging to the class of dying and rising deities can be subsumed under the two larger classes of disappearing deities or dying deities. In the first case, the deities return but have not died; in the second case, the gods die but do not return. There is no unambiguous instance in the history of religions of a dying and rising deity.' In the case of Adonis, Smith points out, the first references to joyous festivities on the third day celebrating resurrection are found in the Christian writers Origen, Jerome, Cyril of Alexandria and Procopius of Gaza; these rites, therefore, may have been copied from Christianity. The resurrection of Attis too is found only in post-Christian writings. Osiris, Smith admits, is dismembered and then 'rejuvenated', but since he then journeyed to the underworld and did not return to earth, he cannot 'be said to have "risen" in the sense required by the dying and rising pattern'. Also, his death and revival were not seasonal, but were a model for the Egyptian beliefs about mummification and the survival resulting from it.**

**To take the last instance first, Smith's use of the word 'rejuvenation' in preference to 'resurrection' (in the case of a dismembered corpse) is hard to understand. While it may be that Osiris's death was not seasonal, Frazer's**

**seasonal interpretation of dying-and-rising gods was not always accepted by his school; Jane Harrison usually preferred a rites-of-passage interpretation. This is not a vital matter, as long as some kind of rebirth is postulated. Again, that Osiris 'did not return to his former mode of existence' is hardly a material point. This is not part of the definition of a dying-and-rising god. That Osiris is the model for the immortality achieved by mummification may also be true without in any way damaging his identity as a dying-and-rising god. The only essential characteristics are that 'he was dead and is alive' and that this brings salvation, however defined.**

**Smith's distinction between 'dying' and 'disappearing' gods is questionable, especially when they disappear to Hades. But in any case, in our present enquiry we are not concerned with disappearing gods, but only with those who are most definitely dead, since they die by extreme violence. There can be little doubt that when Dionysus was torn to pieces, or Osiris dismembered, they were thereby dead; and it is just as unquestionable that they are afterwards found to be alive, and that this revival has significance in their cult for the rebirth of initiates. Finally, Smith's remarks about the lateness of evidence about the resurrection of Adonis and Attis are not convincing. Recent evidence, as summarized by Gasparro, indicates that Attis survived his death at least in the form of an impersonal vitality suffused through nature (rather like the Mithraic bull), and that this concept was centuries earlier than the Roman Attis cult. Moreover, vases of the first century BCE found at Tarsus depict Attis dancing; and these are analyzed by Vermaseren as evidence of Attis's personal resurrection. As for Adonis, Smith's doubt about his resurrection leaves us with a very unlikely cult devoted to mourning the death of Adonis and nothing else. Such a cult would seem to have very little to offer its devotees.**

**In general, we must conclude that there is good evidence that the concept of the salvific revival or resurrection of a violently dying god existed in the mystery cults at the time of Paul from which be borrowed such ideas as they are non-existent in Biblical Judaism. Paul's version of this theme, with its ascent of Yeshua through the pleroma to the position of First Power, clearly owes much to Gnostic theology. But the saving power of the crucifixion itself, followed by the resurrection, is not a Gnostic idea. The emphasis on bloodshed and violence as the precondition of salvation belongs to the mystery-cults alone. Again we encounter Paul's unique synthesis of Gnosticism and the Mystery Religions. Resurrection cannot be said to be a Gnostic idea at all, since Gnosticism does not recognize death as a reality, in the case of pneumatic individuals. Their 'death' is merely the discarding of an illusory shell, the body.**

**So it must be apparent to you by now that what you are reading in the New Testament about Yeshua is nothing more than a unique synthesis of Gnostic ideas from pagan religions mixed cleverly with pagan mystery religions and ideas from their theologies as gathered for different Gentile religions of that time. This is a bitter pill to swallow for the typical Christian. But I had to as I was forced over time to realize that I had believed in the "wrong Yeshua".**

**If you want to learn the truth about Yeshua, the man from Galilee, and the Messianic claimant from the First Century then read the articles on this web site concerning the "Jewish Jesus".**
**(http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com)**

# IN CONCLUSION

**One last though if I might.**

## *Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

**If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. Well if you read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider**

**yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #7

## VICARIOUS ATONEMENT THROUGH DIVINE DEATH FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN ITS EFFICACY

**As described in the previous articles the next tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation as recorded in the New Testament is that of the vicarious atonement effected by the divine death for those who have faith in its efficacy.**

**Since there is no divine death in Judaism, there is nothing to correspond to the atonement effected by a divine death. Animal sacrifices in Judaism, as pointed out in a previous article, do not work in the same way as the death of Yeshua in Paul's soteriological scheme.**

**Answer for yourself: Do animals sacrifices in Biblical Judaism work differently from the way Paul portrays the death of Yeshua in his salvation scheme of things? Yes. Let us see how.**

**First, the animal sacrifices are not vicarious or prophylactic. Even in the case of sin-offerings, the animal does not die in the place of the offerer of the sacrifice.**

**Here is where most all of Gentile Christianity misses the boat. After reading Christian commentators describe in commentaries on Leviticus and the Sacrificial System and how it functioned, as well as Jewish commentators dealing with the same subject matter as well, I was amazed at the great amounts of misinformation which I accepted through allegorical preaching in the Christian Church. Now pay attention please. Since the offerer has *already* expiated his sin by repentance and reparation before ever bringing the animal to the Tabernacle or the Temple (without which no sin offering for a deliberate sin is valid at all, see Lev. 5.23), he does not stand in need of 'salvation', but only of final reconciliation. As mentioned before the Jews never looked to animal sacrifices for salvation. Yet you hear this all the time by Christians who frankly don't know much at all about the sacrificial system of Judaism. To say that the Jews were saved by the "sacrificial system" is simply a Christian invention and a lie. One only needs to study Judaism just a little to see the error of such Christian teaching.**

**Most sacrifices, however, are not sin-offerings, but simply gifts, offered in thanksgiving or out of piety. An exception is the sacrifice of the paschal lamb at the time of the Exodus, whose blood, smeared on the doorposts, saved the Israelites from the death dealing Lord. But this was only one historical occasion, and did not leave its mark on the sacrifices of the Temple. The paschal lamb of Egypt is carefully distinguished in the rabbinic writings from the 'paschal lamb of the generations', which has the status of a festival celebration and has no connotation of prophylaxis or atonement. Atonement was never connected with the Passover and says a lot to the thinking believer about the death of Yeshua as that special time. The message is wrong that the Church teaches. Passover is not about atonement at all!**

Secondly, the sacrifice of Yeshua, according to most Christians, works as an atonement for all sins indiscriminately, while the rabbis teach that the Temple sin-offerings are each offered as final atonement for a *"particular sin"*. These offerings were never for sin "in general" the way Yeshua's death was explained by Paul. In other words, Yeshua dies to wipe out 'sin' in general, while the Temple sin offering wipes out only one sin. **Even the Day of Atonement sacrifice, which is offered for the sins of the congregation indiscriminately, acts only in respect of sins committed in the previous year. As soon as the Day of Atonement is over, the problem of sin exists just as before; all that has happened is that a kind of annual auditing has taken place, so that a new start can be made without a back-log of sin -** and even this, in rabbinic theory, does not work without repentance and reparation. Thus there is no magical element of 'rebirth' of the sacrificer in the Temple sacrifices. **The problem of sin is regarded in a piecemeal manner, as a perennial problem which nothing is ever going to abolish. As long as a person is alive, he will face the temptation to sin day after day. Success in the past is no guarantee of success in the future, and no mystic initiation will transform the personality. At the same time, sin itself is not regarded mystically as an ineradicable spiritual stain, stemming from the sin of Adam, but as an 'inclination' that can be handled and even channelled into good by any ordinary person, by the exercise of his own innate spiritual resources (the 'good inclination') and with the help of the guidance of the Torah. Moreover, if he fails, as he inevitably will from time to time, this is not a matter for despair, for the remedy lies in repentance, or 'return' (teshubah), and those who stray from the way can always return to it.**

This whole mental climate of the sacrificial system and its relationship to obtaining forgiveness and atonement is worlds away from Paul's attitude towards sin and its cure. **Paul does indeed regard sin as a mystical stain that can be removed only by mystical means. This mystical means consists of the death of Christ, which acts as a vicarious atonement for mankind; and also of the 'faith' by which the initiate makes the atonement available for himself.** Both these elements as taught by Paul are derived from Hellenistic religion, not from Judaism, though terminology derived from Jewish sources is used by Paul to 'judaize' his concepts. Here again it must be stressed that the use of a Jewish term does not necessarily argue a Jewish derivation, since such a term can often be given a meaning that is totally alien to every form of Judaism in Paul's time. **The term 'rejudaization' has been much used in New Testament scholarship, to denote an alleged tendency on the part of Christian communities to revert to Judaism. The value of this term is questionable, since it is often an expression of a twentieth-century tendency concerned with discounting and nullifying evidence of the essential Jewishness of Yeshua and his immediate followers; but the term 'judaization' may be a useful way of** referring to the tendency of Paul and his followers to camouflage Hellenistic ideas by giving them Jewish sounding labels. This is deceptive to say the least to those who don't know any better. Again I refer to non-Jews who read the New Testament without any or much background into Biblical Judaism.

In all fairness the idea of sin as a stain on the soul of mankind deriving from the primeval Fall is not entirely absent from rabbinic Judaism, it is there a peripheral notion but always as a "minority opinion", marginalized by conflicting conceptions, and the remedy is not a vicarious sacrifice, but the giving of the Torah. The idea of vicarious sacrifice is also not entirely absent from rabbinic Judaism either; but again as a peripheral idea and a "minority opinion" that has no importance for the general theory of how a person achieves righteousness. I must stress that these "scattered rabbinic comments" are MINORITY OPINIONS and do not reflect the majority opinion of Jewish scholars or the writers of the Old Testament. They reflect rabbis who following the destruction of the Temple were influenced by Hellenism at places like Alexandrian. Thus they are minority opinions not carrying weight with mainline Biblical Judaism.

It is necessary to point out that it is the Pauline idea that Yeshua died for the sins of mankind that has been rejected by Jews, as irreconcilable with the Jewish way of coping with sin and guilt. **But the idea that the Jews rejected Yeshua as under a 'curse' because of the manner of his death is entirely wrong. Many Jews died by crucifixion and were regarded as heroes and martyrs, not as under a curse. Paul's very individual use, in Gal. 3:13, of the biblical verse (Deut. 21:23) about hanging after death by execution, as if it applied to a Roman**

**crucifixion, was not based on any rabbinic source and misses the mark completely. Even a criminal dying by Jewish execution was not regarded as under a curse; on the contrary, his death was regarded as an atonement for his sin. But a Jewish patriot dying by Roman oppression was not regarded as a criminal in any way, but as a martyr. While some scholars, in recent years, have stressed the alleged Jewishness of Paul's ideas, this is one area in which Paul is supposed to have rejected a rooted Jewish idea, the 'curse' of crucifixion, and substituted something new and shocking...especially shocking because of the alleged previous Jewish belief that he who died on a cross incurred a curse - the redemptive power of the cross. There was, in fact, no 'curse' or 'scandal' of crucifixion in Judaism to exorcise, the 'curse' being entirely of Paul's own manufacture. What was indeed divergent but not new in Pauline thought however, was the concept of the cross, or any form of violent death of a savior figure, as the central way to atonement and redemption for mankind. It is true, of course, that Yeshua's death on the cross demonstrated to most Jews (not believing in his resurrection) that he was not the Messiah. But this was not because of the manner of his death, but simply because he had not succeeded in ending the Roman tyranny and instituting the kingdom of God. The idea that his catastrophic failure was a success on the cosmic level was not part of Jewish thinking, and was therefore rejected; but his death on a Roman cross was cause for sorrow, not condemnation, like the deaths of other Messiah-figures before and after him.**

**For Paul, the idea of vicarious sacrifice is of paramount importance. Again and again, he stresses that the violent death of Yeshua atones for the sins of mankind, which could find no atonement except through this sacrifice. Relevant passages are Rom. 3:25 and 5:8-9, which refer to forgiveness and justification through the death and blood of Christ, and Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist, referring to 'the new testament in my blood'. The necessity of the death of Christ for human salvation is expressed by Paul as follows: 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain' (Gal. 2.20-21).**

**W. D. Davies, however, argues that the concept of sacrifice does not figure largely in Paul's writings (unlike in the pseudonymous Epistle to the Hebrews). Davies is aware that first-century Judaism did not regard the animal sacrifices of the Temple as central to atonement for sin (see above). Paul, he argues, as one steeped in rabbinic thought, saw the concept of sacrifice as limited in scope, and therefore gave other concepts priority.**

**Paul, Davies argues, sees the death of Yeshua not as a sacrifice, primarily, but as an exemplification of the concept of 'obedience unto death', the chief model of which, in the Hebrew Bible, is the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. Thus the atonement brought about by Yeshua was not caused by his death, but by his obedience to his mission. Davies adduces evidence from Jewish sources to show that obedience to heavenly commandments by individuals (the Patriarchs being the most noteworthy instance) can build up a stock of 'merits' that is available for others, and thus acts as a means of vicarious atonement.**

**The effect of this argument is to portray Yeshua, in Pauline thought, as primarily a martyr, not a sacrifice. A martyr dies because of his steadfast adherence to his moral principles even in the face of death. A sacrifice, on the other hand, dies not because of principles so strong that they overcome his instinctive desire to stay alive, but because his death itself is desirable and necessary to his aim. The Suffering Servant of Isaiah is undoubtedly a martyr, or at least one prepared to be a martyr (whether he actually suffers death is doubtful). But it is very difficult to conceive Christ, in the Pauline scheme, as a martyr. Christ is certainly 'obedient unto death', but to what commandment is he obedient? The answer surely is that he is obedient to the commandment, or mission, of undergoing death (Phil. 2.8). There is certainly some precedent for this in Jewish tradition, as well as in pagan legends of willing sacrifices, for the figure of Isaac is often portrayed in rabbinic literature as one utterly obedient to the command to suffer a sacrificial death. This makes Isaac a sacrifice, not a martyr, the great difference being that the sacrifice of Isaac was cancelled.**

**Another strategy has been employed by some scholars to argue that the Pauline concept of the death of Yeshua was not sacrificial. This is to argue that the death was not primarily atoning but 'participatory'; i.e. that the effect of the death of Christ is not to wipe out human sins, but to enable humanity to participate in the divinization and resurrection of Christ. This topic belongs to the next article, but here it is sufficient to say that**

**sacrifices may be participatory as well as atoning. In other words, it is an unacceptable narrowing of the definition of sacrifice to confine its purpose to atonement. As we shall see, the sacrifices of the pagan world (though not of Judaism) were often aimed at divinization rather than atonement (though the two concepts are not finally separable). In any case, Paul's participationism does nothing to detach him from the notion of sacrifice, since the sacrificial death of Yeshua is just as necessary to the participationist as to the atoning theory.**

**The general conclusion of the present section is that the idea of vicarious atonement by the death of Christ is not based on any Jewish source. Judaism has an entirely different theory of atonement, based on a radically different psychology of sin and Paul's ideas can be shown to have no genesis in Biblical Judaism or the Old Testament.**

# SO WHERE DOES PAUL GET HIS IDEAS CONCERNING HIS DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT THROUGH THE DIVINE DEATH AND CORRESPONDING BELIEVERS "FAITH" IN SUCH DIVINE DEATH?

**Again the place to look for essential similarity to the Pauline view is in pagan mystery religion. Here we find many examples of the willing sacrificial victim whose death averts the wrath of a god and saves the community from the punishment it deserves for its sins. These are human figures who were 'obedient unto death' as atoning sacrifices in cases of special crisis. Even more relevant, however, are the human-divine sacrificial figures of the mystery religions, whose deaths purge their devotees of their sins and make them eligible for immortality, so rescuing them from the continuing crisis of earthly life. The mystery religion which is nearest in tone to Paulinism is perhaps Orphism, which, more than other mystery religions, had a negative attitude towards human earthly endeavour, and regarded its rites as a universal panacea for the human dilemma, rather than as merely conferring special privileges on the initiated. The death of Dionysus, in Orphism, had an atoning effect for those who shared it mystically, and the resurrection of the god was the guarantee of the entrance of the initiate into a new and superior form of life, in which moral problems were transcended. Whether there was a direct influence of Orphism on Paul, or whether he was influenced rather by the cult of Attis, as seems more probable both for geographical and cultic reasons, is difficult to decide. Further evidence, both about the diffusion of Orphic beliefs, and about the earlier worship of Attis may throw light on the question. There seems no reason, however, to reject the conclusion that some form of mystery religion was the chief influence on him, in respect to the atoning death of Christ, rather than any form of Judaism.**

**I encourage you to read a couple of books that deal with these issues. There are literally hundreds to choose from but my favorites are these:**

**The Religion Of The Occident by Martin Larson**

**The Essene Christian Faith by Martin Larson**

**Ayran Sun-Myths...The Origin Of Religion by Charles Morris**

**Bible Myths And Parallels In World Religions by T. W. Doane**

# IN CONCLUSION

**One last though if I might.**

**Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.**

**If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. Well if you**

**read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom.**

**Now on to the next article.**

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# INVESTIGATING PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION AS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #8

## THE PROMISE OF RESURRECTION AND IMMORTALITY TO FOLLOWERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR

**As described in the previous articles the next tenant of Paul's doctrine of salvation as recorded in the New Testament is that of the promise of resurrection and immortality to devotees of the savior.**

**The belief in the 'resurrection of the dead' (kbiyat hametim) had been part of Judaism for at least two centuries before the time of Yeshua. The belief is plainly stated in the biblical book of Daniel, and is found in much of the intertestamental literature. The New Testament itself attests it as a Pharisee belief which was denied by the small sect of the Sadducees. Since, as Josephus points out, the mass of the people supported the Pharisees, this belief was in fact the norm.**

## DOES PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION DEPART FROM JUDAISM'S VIEW?

**The Jewish belief in the resurrection of the dead, however, was poles apart from the doctrine now put forward by Paul. The Jewish belief did not make resurrection dependent on the sacrificial death of a divine visitant, or on 'faith' in the efficacy of such a sacrifice. In the Jewish belief, all human beings, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, who had led righteous lives would be brought back to life in the body in the Last Days, in order to share in the peace, prosperity and justice of the kingdom of God, conceived not as a bodiless spiritual realm but as the fulfillment of human hopes on earth. The resurrection of the dead must be distinguished sharply from the survival of the soul after death, which was also a Jewish doctrine, but one which received far less emphasis and was not regarded as an essential article of faith. The Jewish doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was thus imbued with characteristic Jewish humanism. All human history was striving towards a messianic kingdom of human fulfillment, and all those individuals who had striven during their lifetime to this end would be given the opportunity to share in the final success. Demythologized, the doctrine expresses the vital thought that in the final kingdom, all whose lives have contributed towards it will in some sense be there.**

***Paul's doctrine, on the contrary, is essentially anti-humanist. He is totally unconcerned with the notion of a kingdom of God on earth, which was the centre of the teaching of Yeshua himself.***

**In Paul's doctrine, resurrection implies an escape from earthly living into a different dimension, where the**

**human problem is not solved but jettisoned. While Paul retains the idea of a bodily resurrection, the humanist implications of this idea are nullified by his specification of the new body as comprising a complete transformation of the human condition into something angelic or even super-angelic (I Cor. 15.50-54).**

***Not the slightest mention is made by Paul of the establishment of a just society on earth as an eschatological aim, though this was the chief concern of the Hebrew prophets and of the intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic literature.***

**Such an aim is abandoned by Paul as impossible of realization for corrupted mankind. He has no vision of a perfected human society; salvation is for him entirely for the individual, as in the Orphic and Gnostic religious schemes, and this salvation consists in the raising of the individual to superhuman status.**

**This anti-humanist and apolitical conception of resurrection arises directly from Paul's central and un-Jewish doctrine of the saving power of Yeshua's death on the cross. It is the death of the divine visitor that saves, not any exercise of human energies towards a just society. Consequently, individual resurrection has no societal aspect, and indeed involves the abolition of society. All those who have endeavoured to show continuity between Paul's conception of resurrection and that of Judaism are ignoring an unbridgeable gulf. When Paul himself aligned himself with the Pharisee doctrine of resurrection (Acts 23.6-9), it is clear that this was merely a device and he did not really believe that his doctrine was the same as that of the Pharisees. This is another instance of 'judaization', the clothing of un-Jewish ideas with a Jewish vocabulary, which is characteristic of Paul in his endeavour to link his version of mystery religion with the Jewish tradition.**

## SO WHERE DID PAUL GET HIS IDEAS FROM FOR HIS DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION IF NOT FROM JUDAISM?

**Answer for yourself: If Paul's ideas on the resurrection cannot be found in the Old Testament and Biblical Judaism, where must we look to see the origin of the concepts as taught by Paul?**

**Since in Paul's thought, the idea of resurrection is connected so inextricably to a religious aim of divinization or achieving superhuman immortal status, we must surely ask where else in the ancient world this connection occurs. The answer is clearly in Gnosticism and mystery religion; but it is only in the latter that this aim is dependent on the death of a human-divine figure, whose death and resurrection are shared symbolically and mystically by the believer. A good example is the initiation of Pythagoras in Crete, as recounted by Porphyry:**

**. . . he lay from dawn outstretched face-foremost by the sea and by night lay near a river covered with fillets from the fleece of a black lamb, and he went down into the Idaean cave holding black wool and spent there the accustomed thrice nine hallowed days and beheld the seat bedecked every year for Zeus, and he engraved an inscription about the tomb with the title 'Pythagoras to Zeus' of which the beginning is: 'Here in death lies Zan, whom they call Zeus' . . .**

**We do not usually think of Zeus as a dying-and-rising god, and the rites of the Idaean cave are usually associated with Dionysus. But God the Son, who suffers death, is ultimately identical with God the Father, whose impassibility is normally preserved. It is clear that the death and rebirth undergone by Pythagoras is associated with a divine death and resurrection. The fact that this testimony comes from a work of the third century CE does not invalidate it, since the information given is clearly traditional.**

**It is clear too that the immortality promised in Egyptian religion through the procedure of mummification was guaranteed by the death and rebirth of Osiris; that in Mithraic religion, the death and diffused life (rather than individual rebirth) of the divine bull brings rebirth to the initiate, after a symbolic death; and that a similar divine death and survival in the religion of Attis is the basis of initiation into the cult. Orpheus is a more complicated figure; he is himself initiated, by death and rebirth, into the mystery of the death and rebirth of Dionysus, but as the leading exemplar of the initiate, he becomes, in some areas, a dying and rising god himself.**

**Since the notion of achieving immortality through the death and resurrection of a divine figure was so widespread in Paul's time, it is inappropriate to look for the origin of the Pauline doctrine in a Jewish concept of resurrection that is totally different in its thrust and emphasis.**

**The difference may be summarized as follows:**

**Jewish resurrection was the recovery of human life, while both Pauline and pagan resurrection are the achievement of supernatural status, i.e. divinization. To be resurrected, in Jewish eyes, was a miracle, but was not essentially different from the resurrections which had occurred in earlier times through the agency of Elijah and Elisha, or the raising of Lazarus by Yeshua. Those resurrected did not become immortals, though they were promised prolonged health into good old age by the prophecy of Isaiah 65.20-22. Even those who believed in the immortality of the resurrected conceived this as an earthly immortality, such as Adam might have had if he had not sinned.**

# PAUL'S UNIQUE ROLE OF FAITH AS CONNECTED WITH THE RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL LIFE

**Divinization through a dying and rising deity involves other ideas which are also not to be found in Judaism, but which are characteristic of Paul. One of these is the Pauline concept of 'faith'. It is through 'faith' in Christ that a person shares in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and thus shares in his divinization. It is through 'faith' too that a person becomes 'in' Christ, sharing in the life and personality of Christ, and thereby achieving mystical fellowship with all those who are similarly 'in' Christ, since they all form one supernatural personality together with Christ and are no longer mere individuals. This is the Pauline theory of the church, which through the 'faith' of its members transcends their human limitations and binds them into a super personality which is continuous with Christ himself and constitutes his 'body'.**

**All these ideas are alien to Judaism, which has an entirely different theory of fellowship. 'Faith' in Judaism (emunah) means loyalty to the Covenant made between God and Israel; and this covenant was made between two partners each of whom retains his original status, one divine, the other human, without intermingling of their natures. It is true that there is a strong sense of fellowship in Judaism, but this does not arise from any mystical transcendence of the bounds of human personality, and does not involve any theory of divinization. It is the fellowship of human beings embarked on a common enterprise and having a common tradition which stresses the value of human status as a God-given condition which it is not the business of religion to transcend: 'The secret things are for the Lord our God, and the revealed things are for us and for our children for ever, to perform the words of this Torah' (Deut. 29:28). W. D. Davies argues that there is a Jewish background for Paul's theory of community 'in Christ' in the Jewish concept of the unity of Israel as shown, for example, in the injunction that 'in every generation, everyone should regard himself as having personally taken part in the Exodus from Egypt'. But this concept of community is at the opposite pole to Paul's. It means an attachment to an enterprise spanning many generations but firmly rooted in an historical event of liberation giving rise to an earthly project of communal living as outlined in the Torah. This is the kind of loyalty by which, for example, Frenchmen make vivid to themselves the ideals of the Revolution, or Americans immerse themselves in the liberating events which created their project of human development. It is not a program of divinization but a dedication to a human aim inspiring enough to transcend normal selfish concerns, and to create a sense of comradeship with all those engaged in the same enterprise, whether of previous or coming generations.**

Paul's project, on the other hand, is directed towards individual salvation and transformation into a supernatural state of being which is indeed shared with others but has nothing to do with the establishment of a just society on earth. The aim, on the contrary, is to transcend the need for justice to others by breaking down the barriers which divide one human personality from another, so that all form part of one supernatural entity...called "the body of Christ". **Paul is not entirely unconcerned with morality and justice, but he regards these as interim matters affecting the transition-period of waiting for the time when all will be transformed and only Christ will exist. W. D. Davies attempts to show a Jewish background for even these conceptions by pointing to Paul's use of the Exodus theme as symbolically foreshadowing the Pauline scheme of salvation. But the use of Jewish expressions is not evidence of a genuine link with Jewish religion. Radical reinterpretations of Jewish material were the main method by which Gnostics reversed the meaning of Judaism. Paul too by regarding the crossing of the Red Sea, for example, as a symbol of Christian baptism (I Cor. 10.2), is reversing the meaning of Judaism, turning it into a scheme of individual, rather than communal or political, salvation. The depoliticization of the Exodus story robs it of its Jewish meaning, while at the same time, of course, aiming at the annexation of Jewish authority for an alien message.**

The true source of ideas of merging of human personality with the divine is in Hellenistic mystery religion, mysticism and philosophy. In Orphism, in particular, the aim of the initiate is to achieve divine status by merging with the divinity of Dionysus. In Gnosticism, itself much influenced by mystery religion, the achievement of gnosis brings with it a supernatural status higher than that of the angels associated with the Demiurge. Thus the obvious place to look for the origins of Paul's notions of 'faith' and its supernaturalizing effects is in the Hellenistic religious environment, while all attempts to find these notions in Judaism are tortuous and unconvincing, since they conflict with Judaism's essential humanism.

Even more important, however, is the fact that the divine sacrifice which, in Paulinism, brings about the divinizing effects which are nowhere to be found in Judaism. **As has been noted, the violent death of the divine figure is just as necessary to the divinizing effect as to that of atonement. There has been some tendency recently to argue that the atoning effect of the cross is not very important in Paul; but even if this is so, the pattern of a divine sacrifice is not any less strong. A 'participationist' interpretation of Paul does nothing to lessen the important in his thought of the violent divine death, and this, in the last resort, is what divides him utterly from Judaism and what Yeshua taught on the resurrection and Eternal life.**

# IN CONCLUSION

**All that I have done in this article, as well as this series, is to contrast for you the teachings of the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings with what is recorded as the teachings of Paul as contained in the New Testament.**

**One last though if I might.**

## *Mal 3:6 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

If you like I believe the above verse and trust its validity then our God does not change. Well if you read these articles you can see that Paul's teachings are often a complete contradiction and in opposition to what was given through Holy men of Old as recorded in the Old Testament. Something sure changed. Coupled with that is the evidence I presented as to the origin for Paul's "changes" as taken from Gnosticism and Pagan Mystery Religions the conclusion is inescapable. If you consider yourself a thinking believer then you easily see that what is recorded in the New Testament and in the Pauline corpus of writings are "changes" from God Word as collected in the Jewish Scriptures. This God which changes not gave us these truths through the Jewish nation and are the backbone for which the church is to founded upon. This God says He changes not. That means His Word does

**not change as well. Well something did. You now have the facts and can make an intelligent decision on this matter. It is time to return to the faith once given to the saints...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew is grafted into Israel and not as its "replacement".**

**Shalom.**

**This completes this series. Shalom.**

**For further study into how sun-worship was incorporated into the Mystery Religions and the Pauline synthesis of it please refer to: http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com**

**Thank You**

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# EIGHT RULES FOR CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF OUR BIBLES

***"And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation." [2 Peter 1:19,20 NAS]***

**We can't have a "sure word" about the meaning of Scripture (or anything else) unless we have a sure method to interpret the words. The following eight rules are the center of all grammatical interpretation. They have been accepted and used by scholars from Socrates to the present. While my hope is that they will be used to "rightly divide the word of truth" of the Holy Bible, they are equally applicable to legal, historical, and other such language. Since the Bible teaches that God is not the author of confusion [1 Cor. 14:33], how can the many disagreements today between multitudes of Christian denominations and the Jewish faith let alone the proliferation of the cults be explained since all, or nearly all, claim to use the Bible as the basis of their doctrines? Nearly all false doctrines taught today by Christians and cultists alike can be traced to the distortion of the meaning of Biblical words in their Jewish setting. These eight rules are prayerfully offered in the hope that they may help many come to the truth of what God says in His Word.**

**"When two interpretations are claimed for a Scripture, the construction most in agreement with all the facts of the case should be adopted. When all the facts of an interpretation are in agreement they sound together in harmony, like notes in a chord.**

***"Biblical interpretation is more than knowing a set of rules, but it cannot be done without the rules. So, learn the rules, and rightly apply them...."***

**Here are the eight rules:**

### 1) THE RULE OF "DEFINITION":

**What does the word mean? Any study of Scripture must begin with a study of words. Define your terms and then keep to the terms defined. The interpreter should conscientiously abide by the plain meaning of the words as taken from the language from which it comes. This quite often may require using a Hebrew/English or Greek/English lexicon in order to make sure that the sense of the English translation is understood and correctly given. A Jewish word or a Greek word must be rendered as correctly as possible when translated and this is not always done by the Gentile writers and interpreters of the manuscripts. That is why consultation with the study aids is mandatory if you are trying to arrive as the correct meaning of the words both written and understood by the speakers and the hearers of the events recorded. In this way one will discover hidden meanings that lie beneath the words rendered in English today; such rendering which mask intended meanings where one can find the non-Jew participating in the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths for instance. Failing to do such study and evaluations of both "nouns" and "verbs" assure us that we lean upon our own understanding**

**and fail to comprehend the hidden Divine message found in the original words.**

### 2) "THE RULE OF USAGE":

**It must be remembered that the Old Testament was written originally by, to and for Jews. The words and idioms must have been intelligible to them just as the words of Christ when talking to them must have been. The majority of the New Testament likewise was written in a milieu of Greco-Roman (and to a lesser extent Jewish) culture and it is important to not impose our modern usage into our interpretation. It is not worth much to interpret a great many phrases and histories if one's interpretations are shaded by pre-conceived notions and cultural biases, thereby rendering an inaccurate and ineffectual lesson. A good example is the term "born again" which has a very unique understanding in it's Jewish context but which is twisted terribly by Gentile Christianity where it looses it's intended meaning completely!**

### 3) THE RULE OF CONTEXT:

**The meaning must be gathered from the context. Every word you read must be understood in the light of the words that come before and after it. Many passages will not be understood at all, or understood incorrectly, without the help afforded by the context. A good example is Acts 15 and the Jerusalem Council where James' ruling is to be understood as the reiteration of the Laws of Noah as binding upon non-Jews for their fellowship with and inclusion into the Israel of God.**

### 4) THE RULE OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

**The interpreter must have some awareness of the life and society of the times in which the Scripture was written. This requires personal study on part of those desiring to acquire "truth." The spiritual principle will be timeless but often can't be properly appreciated without some knowledge of the background. The concept of "being born again" is a perfect example that involves procedures related to one's faith in God that has today been separated from what it meant "historically" when the topic of conversation between Yeshua and Nicodemas. If the interpreter can have in his mind what the writer had in his mind when he wrote without adding any excess baggage from the interpreter's own culture or society. Only then the true thought of the Scripture can be captured resulting in an accurate interpretation. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Our only interest in the past is for the light it throws upon the present."**

### 5) THE RULE OF LOGIC:

**Interpretation is merely logical reasoning. When interpreting Scripture, the use of reason is everywhere to be assumed. Does the interpretation make sense? The Bible was given to us in the form of human language and therefore appeals to human reason - it invites investigation. It is to be interpreted as we would any other volume: applying the laws of language and grammatical analysis. A perfect example is found in the teaching of the doctrine of atonement as found in the Old Testament where the "life" is "in" the blood and that God stated that He gave "it" as a form of atonement. The "in" makes blood the object of the preposition whereas the subject of the sentence is "life." According to Jewish teaching again one's life, by his actions, brings atonement and not the blood (the blood is the vehicle for one's soul...his mind...that produces such actions that brings the atonement). As you can see improper grammar can mean the difference between understanding critical doctrines correctly or incorrectly. As Bernard Ramm said: "What is the control we use to weed out false theological speculation? Certainly the control is logic and evidence... interpreters who have not had the sharpening experience of logic ... may have improper notions of implication and evidence. Too frequently such a person uses a basis of appeal that is a notorious violation of the laws of logic and evidence."**

### 6) THE RULE OF PRECEDENT:

**We must not violate the known usage of a word and invent another for which there is no precedent. Just as a judge's chief occupation is the study of previous cases, so must the interpreter use precedents in order to determine whether they really support an alleged doctrine. Consider the Bereans in Acts 17:10-12 who were called "noble" because they searched the Scriptures to determine if what Paul taught them was true. Likewise**

**the use of the term "virgin" in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is altered from the Jewish precedent where the term originally used never implied a "virgin" in Isa. 7:14. The precedent of translating the Hebrew word as "non-virgin" is altered and changed from the Greek translation on downward throughout history.**

### 7) THE RULE OF UNITY:

**The parts of Scripture being interpreted must be construed with reference to the significance of the whole. An interpretation must be consistent with the rest of Scripture. This simply means that no parts of the New Testament, for example, can contradict Moses, the Prophets, the Writings, or Jesus and be correct!**

### 8) THE RULE OF INFERENCE:

**An inference is a fact reasonably implied from another fact. It is a logical consequence. It derives a conclusion from a given fact or premise. It is the deduction of one proposition from another proposition. Such inferential facts or propositions are sufficiently binding when their truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence. This evidence is easily obtained by following the above 7 rules of interpretation.**

**Learning these eight rules and properly applying them will help keep any interpreter from making errors and will hopefully alleviate many of the disagreements unfortunately present in Christianity today.**

***"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: to understand a proverb, and the interpretation." [Proverbs 1:5,6]***

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# PaRDeS: THE FOUR LEVELS OF JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF THEIR SCRIPTURES

**The Hebrew/Aramaic word PARDES is spelled in Hebrew and Aramaic without vowels as PRDS. PaRDeS refers to a park or garden, esp. the Garden of Eden. The word appears three times in the Aramaic New Testament (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4 & Rev. 2:7).**

**The word PRDS is also an acronym (called in Judaism "notarikon") for:**

- **[P]ashat....in Hebrew..."simple"**
- **[R]emez....in Hebrew..."hint"**
- **[D]rash....in Hebrew..."search"**
- **[S]od...In Hebrew..."hidden"**

**These are the four levels of understanding the scriptures. Each layer is deeper and more intense than the last, like the layers of an onion.**

## PASHAT

**The first level of understanding is Pashat (simple). The Pashat is the literal meaning. It is similar to what Protestant hermeneutics calls "Gramatical Historical Exegesis" and also similar to what Protestant Hermeneutics calls "The Literal Principle."**

**The Pashat is the plain, simple meaning of the text; understanding scripture in its natural, normal sense using the customary meanings of the words being used, in accordance with the primary exegetical rule in the Talmud that no passage loses its Pashat (b.Shab. 63a; b.Yeb. 24a). While there is figurative language (like Ps. 36:7) symbolism (like Rom. 5:14); allegory (like Gal. 4:19-31) and hidden meanings (like Rev. 13:18; see also 1 Cor. 2:7) in the Scriptures, the first thing to look for is the literal meaning or Pashat.**

**The following rules of thumb can be used to determine if a passage is figurative and therefore figurative even in its Pashat:**

- **1. When an inanimate object is used to describe a living being, the statement is figurative.**
- **(Example: Prov. 18:10)**
- **2. When life and action are attributed to an inanimate object the statement is figurative.**
- **(Example: same example Prov. 18:10)**
- **3. When an expression is out of character with the thing described, the statement is figurative.**
- **(Example: Ps. 17:8)**

**The Pashat is the keystone of Scripture understanding. If we discard the Pashat we lose any real chance of an**

**accurate understanding. We are left with a no-holds-barred game of pure imagination in which we are no longer objectively deriving meaning from the Scriptures (exegesis), but subjectively reading meaning into the scriptures (eisegesis) Thus the Talmud twice warns us: "No passage loses its Pashat" (b.Shab. 63a; b.Yeb. 24a).**

## REMEZ

**The next level of understanding is called in Hebrew Remez (hint). This is the implied meaning of the text. Peculiarities in the text are regarded as hinting at a deeper truth than that conveyed by its Pashat. Often this "hinting" back refers to a prior example where the same word or concept has been previously taught in the text. Hinting back to a prior understanding reinforces the intended meaning in the now and present of the speaker.**

**An example of implied "Remez" meaning may be found in Ex. 21:26-26-27 where we are told of our liability regarding eyes and teeth. By the "Remez" understanding we know that this liability also applies to other body parts.**

## DRASH

**Another level of understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "drash" meaning "search", this is the allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. Creativity is used to search the text in relation to the rest of the Scriptures, other literature, or life itself in order to develop an allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. This process involves eisegesis (reading of the text) of the text. But understand, before something can be “like” something else, it can never remove the reality of what it compares itself to. The context determines the peshat, and then and only then can be have a drash. We cannot have a drash without a prior peshat!**

**Three important rules of thumb in utilizing the drash level of understanding a scripture are:**

- **[1] A drash understanding can not be used to strip a passage of its Pashat meaning, nor may any such understanding contradict and Pashat meaning of any other scripture passage. As the Talmud states "No passage loses its Pashat." (b. Shab. 63a; b.Yeb. 24a)**
- **[2] Let scripture interpret scripture. Look for the scriptures themselves to define the components of an allegory.**
- **[3] The primary components of an allegory represents specific realities. We should limit ourselves to these primary components when understanding the text.**

## SOD

**The final level of understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "Sod" meaning "hidden". This understanding is the hidden, secret or mystic meaning of a text. This process often involves returning the letters of a word to their prime-material state and giving them new form in order to reveal a hidden meaning (interpreting them through the numbers of the letters for example). An example may be found in Rev. 13:18 where the identity of the Beast is expressed by its numeric value 666.**

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# WHAT IS THIS LAW THAT PAUL REJECTED?

It seems necessary to stop here and find out what this scorned Law is that Paul wanted to efface and replace. The Five Books of Moses do not only, or primarily, consist of laws. They constitute a history of the Hebrews in which are recounted episodes in the early and formative development of the nation. Among other things, Jews look upon the Pentateuch as a history book. Interwoven among the historical narratives are laws or commandments. These are called in Hebrew *mitzvot* which means good deeds, for, in the Hebrew mind, to obey the laws is to perform good deeds. The people of Israel, known today as Jews, are obligated to observe and practice these deeds to the best of their ability. The same can be said for the non-Jews who, like the Jews, find themselves under Covenant with God and this Covenant has stipulations in the forms of Laws which reflect man's responsibility to live in Covenant with his Creator. The only difference is that the Jews have a more progressive Covenant containing more Covenant stipulations and privileges. The word Torah actually means teaching, not Law or law (with the lower case 1) as it is translated in the New Testament. It is teaching people how to live moral and decent lives in order to achieve a high ethical standard of behavior.

The Torah contains 613 laws, most of which begin with the Ten Commandments in Chapter 20 of the Book of Exodus. However, there are some injunctions and laws in Genesis and in the Second Book of the Torah before the Decalogue.

**The laws are not organized according to subject matter as in modem law books. They are not even separated from the narrative. Nor are they divided according to civil or criminal codes. Many of the laws are an *appeal* or a *demand* for kindness or helpfulness to others, regardless of whether they are Hebrews or "the stranger within your gates." Although the laws are not categorized and many would overlap categories, it seems easier to discuss them within four broad classifications: laws dealing with basic morality, with social welfare and interpersonal relations, with ceremonies and rituals, and with health.**

## THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE LAWS IN THE TORAH

**The first group of laws--those concerned with basic morality--are general fundamental rules of conduct. The principles stated in the Ten Commandments are examples of these laws. They have been accepted, at least in theory, by most people in the world, such as honoring one's parents or providing workers with one day of rest a week. Among other rules, found in the Decalogue and elsewhere in the Torah, are prohibitions against murder, adultery, stealing, perjury, and bribery--laws which most nations have incorporated into their legal codes. Still other ethical injunctions in this category range from such diverse rules as requiring humane treatment of animals to the establishment of courts of law accessible to all people. The principle that everyone, regardless of status, is accountable to the law was first articulated in the Torah; king and commoner were both answerable for their actions. This is quite different from other ancient law codes which distinguished between social classes in their demands and penalties. The rights of an accused are protected by the requirement of two credible witnesses to his crime. The laws in this classification set a basic standard of ethics for people to live by and on which to develop other legislation.**

**Perhaps most numerous and far-reaching have been those laws dealing with social welfare and interpersonal relations. They show concern for the weak and vulnerable in society-- widows and orphans, the poor, foreigners or "strangers," and servants or bondsmen. The rules, which mandate certain behavior or actions, reveal great compassion, sensitivity, and psychological insight. A few examples will illustrate these qualities:**

**The treatment of workers is dealt with in several statutes. One of them requires an employer to pay a day-worker immediately and not withhold or delay his remuneration overnight, for he may need it to feed his family.**

**A wealthy landowner was enjoined from harvesting the corners of his fields or gathering up any produce which had fallen from the hands of his workers. This was to enable the poor to gather crops by their own labor and thus have the dignity of earning their own keep. The added purpose and advantage of the law was to preclude begging and hunger.**

**The behavior incumbent on victorious Israelite warriors toward captive female prisoners of war was a tribute to the humanity and understanding of these laws. The conquering soldier who desired a captive woman might not possess her or treat her like a slave. If he wanted to marry her, he had to allow her a month to mourn the loss of her family and to accustom herself to her new surroundings. This gave her time to grieve and to adjust to her new circumstances. After marriage the woman was entitled to the full rights of a wife which were clearly defined in the Torah. This law prevented and forbade the wanton abuse and rape to which captive women have been subject throughout history in most parts of the world after the military defeat of their countries.**

**Much of the legislation in the Torah deals with the underdogs in society. The problem of the impoverished person who sold himself a bondsman (or bondswomen) is the subject of Dt. 15:12- 18. An Israelite who could not support himself or meet his obligations indentured himself and, through his work, earned food and shelter and paid off his debts. This status lasted for a limited time--six years. In the seventh year the bondsman went free. The master not only benefitted from the servant's labor, he also incurred obligations to him. He had to treat the bondsman well. He also had to provide the bondsman with the means to support himself after his period of service ended so that he would not lapse into dependency again. Although the word, *eyed,* which has been translated as slave, is used in the Hebrew Bible, the concept of slavery was unlike that in ancient Greece and Rome or the United States before the Civil War. Slavery was for life; a bondsman served no more than six years. If the Jubilee intervened, all bondsmen were freed. The Jubilee occurred every fifty years.**

**A slave owner had power of life and death, as well as the freedom to mutilate or otherwise abuse his slave. A master who mistreated his Hebrew bondsman forfeited his rights to the latter's labor for he immediately went free. An escaped slave had to be returned to his owner. A bondsman who fled from his master was not to be surrendered to him. Laws governing servitude in the Pentateuch were far more enlightened and humane than those in effect elsewhere in the world for centuries afterward.**

**In this section on laws relating to social welfare, those requiring the establishment of cities of refuge for accidental killers deserve mention. These statutes accomplished a double purpose. They protected the unintentional slayer from revenge by the family of the victim and prevented the development of blood feuds which could then entail the loss of many more innocent lives. Cities of refuge were designated on both sides of the Jordan (since the territory allotted for the Promised Land was on both sides of the river). The killer could live in one of the cities with his family. He did not escape punishment entirely inasmuch as he had to leave his city and home but he was not subject to execution and could avoid being killed.**

**Perhaps the laws in this category relating to interpersonal relations are best exemplified and summarized by the command, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18).**

**Another set of laws in the Torah deals with ceremonies and rituals. Some are associated with the celebration of holidays, festivals, and the Sabbath. These laws prescribe how and when certain events should be**

**commemorated and the rites connected with them. For example, at Passover the family is to recall the Exodus from Egypt and to refrain from eating leaven as a reminder of the unleavened bread their ancestors ate. The injunction to keep the Sabbath as the day of rest is found in the Fourth Commandment, where it is stated that the**

**Lord rested on the seventh day after completing His creation. Other I laws concerned with ritual practice include circumcision and dietary restrictions. These laws may also rightfully be considered in the category of health statutes.**

**There are regulations about ceremonies and rites that have largely fallen into disuse. They deal with construction of the Temple, responsibilities of priests and Levites, sacrifices and offerings, support of the Temple and its personnel, and specific formalities in the Temple. Most of these laws are no longer applicable. At the time of Jesus and**

**Paul, when the Temple stood, these laws had relevance. After the destruction of the Temple, prayers replaced sacrifices and worship services, and Jews were encouraged to contribute to the maintenance of synagogues instead of the Temple.**

**Many diverse laws can fall under the heading of health regulations. Among them are those calling for periodic bathing, hand-washing before eating, quarantine of the sick, regular examinations by priests to determine when the sick had recovered, and purification after contact with a corpse. Cleanliness and hygiene are of utmost importance. The kind and preparation of food that is consumed are also related to health and several laws are devoted to the subject.**

**In its criticism of the Torah the New Testament focuses on three sets of laws, those relating to circumcision, dietary restrictions, and Sabbath observance. We discussed the first elsewhere in our other websites.. We might note here that a non-Jew who had himself circumcised usually did this in conjunction with conversion and therefore, made a commitment to accepting the Torah as his way of life. Let us consider now the other two requirements.**

**The dietary statutes forbidding the food of certain animals, fish, and fowl are found in Lev. 11 and Dt. 14. Stated simply, prohibited foods comprise shellfish, all beasts and birds of prey, and the flesh of such domestic animals as pigs, horses, and camels. The Torah describes as "unclean," animals which are "not cloven-footed and do not part the hoof and chew the cud." Israel was to be a holy nation and was, therefore, supposed to practice laws of purity. Food plays an important role in this concept. Jews who observe these laws believe that they may not arbitrarily decide which commandments to set aside and which ones to obey since they all came from the same holy source. One more observation is in order. Besides Jews, Moslems and Christian Seventh Day Adventists also keep the dietary laws and would deny that they constitute an undue hardship or are harsh laws, as asserted in the New Testament.**

**To enjoy the Sabbath and refrain from work on it are *mitzvot* prescribed in the Fourth Commandment. This does not mean that necessary work may not be performed on the seventh day. A farmer *must* milk his cows on Saturday. A physician is duty-bound to treat an acutely ill person. But in a case of a chronic condition, a Sabbath observing doctor would not *schedule* a particular procedure on Saturday, just as hospitals in the western world do not schedule operations, laboratory tests, X-rays, or treatments on Sunday. Only in case of emergencies are such arrangements made. Sabbath observance, so ridiculed by Paul and the evangelists, was taken over as Sunday practice. Many Christian denominations have instituted similar limitations on Sunday activities as those proscribed in the Torah for the Sabbath. Jews saw no reason to change what the Torah had unequivocally commanded as the day of rest and have consequently, kept the seventh day as holy.**

**This cursory glance at the laws in the Torah is meant to give readers, otherwise unfamiliar with them, an idea of their general nature and spirit. Obviously, it is not a thorough or all-inclusive study of the commandments; that is not the purpose of this article. However, even a superficial "spot check" of the laws displays a set of rules and practices exhibiting a lot of common sense and compassion.**

**They are not harsh and vengeful as Paul and his disciples portrayed them in order to prove that the new covenant was superior to and superseded the "old one." Alan Davies, in Anti-Semitism and the Christian Mind, pp. 55-61, quotes many tirades against Judaism and its Law by the Church Fathers. Their attacks on the religion were stated in the vilest language. The Unitarian theologian, R. Travers Herford, said, "if Judaism had really been at all what Paul described, it would have become extinct long before Christianity appeared. No people could ever have survived with such an intolerable religion...as the misshapen phantom conjured up by Paul" (R. Travers Herford, The Pharisees, pp. 219-220). The picture became so distorted that Christians often wondered in horror at a people so perverse as to cling to such a vile body of laws.**

***The less they Gentile believer knew about the Jewish Faith and the Jewish Jesus, the more easily the Gentile Christian could accept Paul's caricature of the Torah. Innumerable Christians remained ignorant of the Torah by not reading the original document and relying instead on its depiction by Paul and his successors. Under those circumstances they could not know the ethics and morality which the Torah demanded and evoked in its adherents, much less the beauty they found in it.***

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# MYSTERIES SURROUND PAUL'S GOSPEL AND HIS VIEW OF THE LAW

**Paul's unrestrained criticism of a covenant attributed to God raises perplexing questions. The depiction of the Torah, not only by Paul but by other apostles (such as the author of Hebrews who was himself pro-Pauline) and their followers, leads to several puzzles.**

**Answer for yourself: If God made such a faulty or pernicious covenant, how could Paul or his adherents have confidence in another one He would devise?**

**Answer for yourself: Would not or should not a second testament from the same source arouse suspicion and doubt?**

**Answer for yourself: Could people trust the new beliefs?**

**Answer for yourself: Might *they* also not be subject eventually to fundamental changes?**

**Answer for yourself: If the Law brought wrath, why would a just God give such corrupting commandments?**

**Answer for yourself: Additionally, would He impose them on a trusting and believing people?**

**Remember, the Israelites had agreed to accept the Torah at Sinai, without even knowing its contents--just because it came from the Almighty.**

**Paul claimed that the Law was given to Israel because the nation was so wicked.**

**Answer for yourself: If this were the case, were the laws supposed to improve their behavior or elicit even worse conduct?**

**Answer for yourself: If the goal were the former, and the laws failed in their objective, were God's commandments flawed?**

**Answer for yourself: How can we reconcile a belief in a perfect God Who is omnipotent and omniscient (which Paul acknowledged) with a deity whose laws failed in their purpose?**

**Answer for yourself: Are we to believe as Paul taught that these Laws were supposed to evoke good deeds but instead led to bad ones; they were meant to improve life and worsened it?**

**Answer for yourself: If God's power is unlimited, then would His will not be done and the purpose of His Law not be accomplished?**

**Answer for yourself: On the other hand, did God design the laws to elicit sin, transgression, and wrath?**

**Answer for yourself: Is He so deceptive and cruel?**

**Answer for yourself: How can we--or rather, Paul--believe that God is good and loving if He perpetrated such a ruse?**

This portrayal more accurately fits the capricious behavior of the Greek gods on Mount Olympus, playing tricks on unsuspecting humans. It certainly does not describe a God of justice and righteousness which the Hebrew Bible assumes. Paul's damning representation of the statutes in the Torah stirs still other queries.

**Answer for yourself: If the "old covenant" is so defective that it required rewriting and restructuring, why is it cited so often, especially as an authority, by its critics?**

**Answer for yourself: If the laws led to sin and death, why did Christianity incorporate so many of them into its canon, such as the Decalogue, injunctions to love one's neighbor and give charity to the poor, and restrictions on certain sexual practices?**

Many of the injunctions do not appear in the Noachic laws. some Pauline interpreters say the latter were the only ones valid for Gentiles as rules for living while the Torah was incumbent on the Jews. However, Paul did impose "non-Noachic laws" on his adherents also. The Laws given at Sinai did not restrict them to Israelites. It is believed that along the Hebrews who fled from Egypt were large numbers of Egyptians. Non-Jews have always been welcome to join the covenant. Nothing in the Hebrew Bible speaks of God abandoning a people who had not accepted the Torah. The Book of Jonah is an example of God saving a nation which not only was not in the covenant but had been wicked. The righteousness or repentance of a people assured them salvation or redemption.

**Answer for yourself: Why, indeed, has virtually every civilized society enacted a legislative code that encompasses many of the laws found in the Torah, such as establishing courts of justice, subjecting everyone equally to the same law, forbidding cruelty to animals, and isolating the contagiously sick?**

**Paul's assertion regarding the transitory nature of the Law creates another enigma. He claimed in GAL 3:8:**

**The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham.**

Forget for a moment that Galatians Chapter 3 was not in the First New Testament collected by Marcion in 150 A.D. but surfaces under Irenaeus in 180 A.D. We will assume a Paul or pro-Pauline authorship in what is said below. **Paul expected the end of the world shortly (1 COR 7:29- 31) and was convinced that God had a plan for all humanity, not only for Israel. His anticipation of the end of an era might explain why Paul and his adherents did not consider it strange that God had formulated a Law five hundred years *after* Abraham, gave it to Moses for transmittal to the Hebrews, and yet meant to abrogate it.**

To Jews the Torah was immutable and irreplaceable, at least until the advent of the Messianic Age. Opinion is divided among scholars as to the continuation or the abolition of the Law in Messianic times. Paul expected the end of the age, and with it's coming, he believed that the Law would be abrogated. True Gnostics never accepted it; for Paul, who was a modified Gnostic, the Law was temporary. For Jews the age was not ending and neither was the Law as seen in the failure of the appearance of the Messiah and the fulfillment of the Messianic Prophecies. The Law of YHVH was to continue and Christianity had gotten it completely wrong!

Jews did not question the need to abide by the laws until that time, especially in light of the numerous passages in the Torah mandating devotion and obedience. Although there were apocalyptic groups among the Jews, none advocated the abrogation of the Law.

**There is another problem which Paul's arguments raise. He claimed that Israel was given the Law because of sinful acts (Gal. 3:19).**

**Answer for yourself: Does this mean that laws are only for sinful nations?**

**Paul cleverly avoided reference to the famous Roman law through which an empire, consisting of many nations, was governed. If the transgressions of a society are measured by the presence of a body of laws, there are few nations which would escape Paul's stigma. It is, evidently, not the *presence* of laws which determines whether a people is sinful but the *kind* of laws it has and the *way* it enforces them. Paul's reasoning leads to a conclusion that he, himself, would have to reject as absurd.**

**Paul's doctrines regarding the Law bring still another matter to mind. Although Paul did not use the words, "the New Israel," for his Gentile followers, the term found validation in his writings. It was his thesis that the Gentiles were Abraham's heirs. This reasoning, not illogically, led his disciples, such as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and other apostles of the faith, to the conclusion that the Gentiles or Christians were the New Israel.**

**Answer for yourself: If Christians have received Israel's heritage, must they not honor Israel's covenant?**

**To do so, of course, would be to continue observing the Law. As the English Biblical scholar, C.H.Dodd, said, "It is confusing and misleading for Paul to say 'we uphold the Law' unless the moral principles which underlie the precepts of the Law are fulfilled by those who rely on divine grace (C.H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul To The Romans, p. 64).**

**Answer for yourself: In other words, does the heir of Israel not inherit all of its legacy--the responsibilities of keeping the Law along with the privileges of being God's people?**

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TORAH AND SALVATION AS TAUGHT IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

**Before we can begin a serious investigation into Paul's misuse of the Jewish Scriptures in his denigration of the Jewish Law in developing his "new religious" synthesis in the New Testament I feel it is necessary to discuss in summary fashion the relationship of faith and obedience to the doctrine of salvation as found in the Jewish Scriptures.**

**So much has been said about salvation and faith in terms of Paul's Christological doctrines that it might be interesting to summarize here a Jewish understanding of these spiritual concepts.**

**No one has given a more succinct and precise interpretation of what salvation means to Jews than the Christian theologian, E.P. Sanders. He explained it this way:**

**Salvation comes by membership in the covenant while obedience to the commandments preserves one's place in the covenant (E. P. Sanders, Paul And Palestinian Judaism, pp. 419-422). A Jewish scholar, H. J. Schoeps, emphasized the partnership character of the brit or covenant, as involving mutual obligations between God and Jews (H. J. Schoeps, Paul, p. 218). The Torah and covenant are juxtaposed because they are so closely connected. When the prophets berated Israel for transgressing the law, they spoke of breaking the covenant. It was that brit which assured Israel of her redemption (salvation) by God since that was His side of the bargain.**

**Paul emphasized faith and placed it in opposition to the Law. A person who knew nothing about Judaism (the typical uneducated Christian concerning the basic religious tenants concerning Judaism) could easily get the impression that faith was antithetical to that religion. Paul's doctrine of faith versus law is based on a fallacious assumption that faith excludes law (E. P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 20). This polarity of faith and the law is contrary to the continuous meaning of the Bible narrative and unintelligible to the Jewish reader. Even in the Midrash the merit of faith and the merit of obedience to law are set along side each other and not played off against one another. Faith stemmed from fidelity to God and His law.**

**Quite apart from scholarly statements, the piety and devotion of Jews to their Torah through three-and-a-half millennia of adversity, exile, and persecution stands as testimony to their faith. No other proof or learned pontification is as strong or convincing as this empirical evidence.**

**To fully understand these critical issues I highly recommend that you purchase and read completely these books by E. P. Sanders because in so doing you will be able to see and grasp the deviation of Paul from Biblical Faith. Failure to possess such information concerning what the Jewish Scriptures teach about the relationship of faith and obedience in relation to salvation has caused untold millions to read the Pauline literature and never notice that his "gospel" is a direct contradiction of what God has said from Genesis through Malachi.**

the relationship between the torah and salvation as taught in the hebrew scriptures

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# PAUL AND THE JUDAIZERS...HIS ATTEMPTS TO THWART THE TEACHINGS OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

**Besides propounding and spreading doctrines of the new religion by way of the epistles, Paul and other apostles also used the vehicle to fight competition both from within their ranks and outside of the faith. Many passages allude to a division in the Church which seems to reflect a conflict between Paul and his rivals within the movement. Verses in several chapters in First Corinthians (1, 2, 4, 6, 10) and Philippians 1:15-18 speak of quarrels among contesting factions.**

*Not everyone was a follower of Paul and many rejected him and his peculiar Gospel that contradicted Moses and Yeshua*

**More numerous are references to the ideological differences with "those who would lead them astray." These were people who were perceived by Paul as serious and dangerous adversaries and came to be known as "Judaizers" (Encyclopedia Judaica, 1971, Vol. 10, p. 398; New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967, Vol. 8, p. 13) The word is not found in the New Testament. The term is used loosely to identify persons who practiced some Jewish customs and observed some Jewish laws.**

**This is a complex subject. Writers have distinguished three groups among Judaizers:**

- **Jewish Christians**
- **Gentile Judaizing Christians**
- **God-fearers**

**The Jewish Christians were Jews who believed in Jesus, yet continued to observe Jewish law.**

**The Judaizing Christians group consisted of Gentile Christians who adopted certain aspects of Jewish law; some of them had observed certain Jewish practices prior to their conversion (to Christianity) because of their attraction to these customs. Others had not kept any Jewish rites before becoming Christian (Robert Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews, pp. 69-70).**

**The God-Fearers class of people were variously called "God-fearers, God-worshippers, or sympathizers." They were half-way Jews. Scholars differ in their interpretation of archaeological and literary evidence. Some authorities believe that God-fearers are a literary and theological invention. Others are convinced, from archaeological remains and literary documentation, of the existence and ubiquity throughout the Roman Empire of Godfearers (Biblical Archeology Review, Sep/Oct. 1986, Vol. 12, the following articles: Robert F. Tannenbaum, "Jews and God-Fearers in the Holy City of Aphrodite," p. 54: Louis H. Feldman, The Omnipresence of the God- Fearers, p. 58; Saul Lieberman, Greek In Jewish Palestine, pp. 77, 81. This scholar wrote that the God-fearers were semi-proselytes who existed in the first century C.E. and were highly regarded**

**by the rabbis).**

***The chief identifying mark of all groups was the same: observance of some Jewish law such as the celebration of festivals and the Sabbath, studying Jewish Scriptures, and keeping certain fasts.***

**There are references to Judaizers and God-fearers in Philo, Josephus, Acts, Greek and Roman writers, and the Talmud. Judaizers and God-fearers seem to have been very numerous and their large numbers probably resulted from proselytizing by Jews (Salo Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, pp. 170, 370- 372).** According to Louis Feldman, the concept of God-fearers *(theosobeis* in Greek and *yirai shamayim* in Hebrew) was not limited to Gentile sympathizers with Judaism but also referred to full converts to Judaism and to natural-born Jews.

It is difficult to determine exactly who these Judaizers and God-fearers were in terms of their original background and to what extent they overlapped. Probably, more often than not, God-fearers were Gentiles, who maintained an attachment to Jewish practices. They attended, and were accepted in, synagogues where they had made an accommodation to Judaism. They were monotheists and participated in some ceremonial requirements of the Law such as Sabbath and dietary observance. However, they found circumcision a deterrent to full conversion. Judaizers were either Gentiles or Jews who had espoused a belief in Jesus, but continued to observe certain Jewish practices. Those who were "original" Gentiles were a target of Paul's proselytizing efforts, especially if they had converted to Christianity and continued to observe Jewish rites.

**Paul was angry and frustrated that so many followers of Jesus were Judaizers who remained stubbornly faithful to Jewish practices.** Jewish missionaries were attracting actual and potential Christians to their religion. Christianity was forced to regard Judaism as a serious rival for the allegiance of pagans and committed Christians alike (John Gager, Origins of Anti-Semitism, p. 6). Gentile Judaizing Christians were objects of scorn and animosity by Church leaders from Paul to John Chrysostom, the fourth century patristic whose vituperative sermons against Jews and Judaizers were notorious John Chrysostom was a bishop and Church Father. He preached eight sermons in Antioch in 386-7. They were directed against Gentile Judaizing Christians who were observing Jewish holidays and customs along with Christian rites. He considered this apostasy. Chrysostom fought against the attractions of Judaism to his Christian congregation. His sermons were tirades which could and did serve as models for obscene attacks on Judaism and provocations to violence against Jews. This man was elevated by his church to sainthood (Rosemary Ruether, Faith and Fratricide, Chapter 3; Robert Wilken, *op. cit.*, p. 161-2). It is Wilken's belief that Chrysostom did not influence his congregation to violence against Jews but that he exerted a powerful influence on later Christianity. Chrysostom's works were circulated through the Church over the centuries and were a factor in forming Christian attitudes toward Jews in times and places far removed from Antioch. They were effective in rousing Russian hordes to pogroms and medieval church-goers throughout Europe to slaughter Jews.

## PAUL'S WARNING TO BELIEVE NO OTHERS THAN HIMSELF

**Several epistles are largely or partly devoted to attacks on Jewish missionaries and the backsliding proselytes of Paul. The letters range from warnings to avoid those who mislead them away from Christianity to threats of forfeiting salvation by leaving the faith (Hebrews for example is a treatise written trying to stop those leaving Pauline Christianity for a more Biblical example of Biblical Faith as taught by Yeshua).**

**Paul realized that prevention was the best cure. He, therefore, admonished his reader to stay away from**

**"unbelievers" who questioned or challenged his teachings.**

- In 2 Cor. 6:14-16 Paul cautioned his respondents against being "yoked together with unbelievers" whom he likened to Belial (meaning worthless or wickedness in Hebrew). It was used as a code word for Jews and others who did not accept Paul's doctrines. Thus, Paul built up the "logical" sequence: those who disagree with his teachings are unbelievers (no matter their monotheistic beliefs); unbelievers are wicked; therefore, disagreement with Paul is wickedness which can and must be avoided by shunning those who reject his religious ideas.
- Paul continued this theme in Rom. 16:17-18 when he urged his respondents "to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way, contrary to the teachings you have learned. Keep away from them....By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people."
- The same idea obsessed Paul in 2 Cor. 11:3-6 when he warned against being led astray by false apostles, as Eve had been beguiled by the serpent. He expressed disappointment in the people for their *tolerance* in listening to other apostles who preached a gospel different from his. Let us not forget that these other Apostles represented the Jerusalem Church, James, Peter, and John; the Apostles who knew Jesus best!
- He cautioned his listeners to beware of those who "are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us so that you may be zealous for them" (Gal. 4:17).

**This is an exact description of Paul's objective: to win over converts who would be committed exclusively to his doctrines and to turn those converts against their former beliefs and against those who still held them. In psychology it is called projection, for he projected onto the Judaizers his own methods and goals.**

**Paul endured no competition. He was not about to give the same quarter to others which he had been afforded. Prior to becoming the apostle exclusively to the Gentiles, Paul had preached to Jews in synagogues according to Acts. It is conventional wisdom among New Testament scholars to consider events in Acts which are not corroborated in Paul's epistles as unreliable. Despite this, some scholars, like Lloyd Gaston (in Paul and the Torah, p. 16) believe that Paul was a student of Gamaliel, although there is no claim in Paul's letters to that effect or evidence in them of sufficient knowledge of Torah or even of Hebrew to warrant a conviction that he studied at such an advanced place of Jewish learning. There is the possibility, however, that *some* of the events in Acts occurred and either were not mentioned by Paul because they weren't relevant in his letters or they *were mentioned* in epistles that were lost. F.J. Foakes-Jackson in The Acts of the Apostles, p. 148, mentioned another possibility. He stated "points of difference with Paul's epistles may be explained by the fact that he was relating events from a different viewpoint." He and his colleagues had entered the synagogues of Greece and Asia Minor claiming to be Jews. They had been given freedom to preach about Jesus and his messiahship and resurrection. Of course they had gone beyond those beliefs of the Nazarenes and had propounded their own dogma. Wherever Paul had success in convincing his listeners, he did not want them exposed to any challenge to his philosophy or to any views which might attract his converts (back) to Judaism. Hence his constant warnings against contacts with anyone who disagreed with him and "his gospel" whom he labeled as "unbelievers," whom he transformed into the enemy. His successors learned Paul's lessons well and put them into practice.**

# PAUL'S MAGNUM OPUS...THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

**Paul's strongest invectives against Judaizers are found in his Epistle to the Galatians. He denounced any other teaching as false. His alone was true. He pronounced a solemn curse on those who preached a different doctrine. Let us read his words in 1:6-9:**

***I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other titan the one we preached to you, let him be cursed. As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be cursed.***

**Such was Paul's reaction to the competition of Judaizers! How different are these words from his self-righteous claim in 1 Cor. 4: 12-13:**

***When we are cursed, we bless...When we are slandered, we answer kindly.***

Not only did Paul's opponents not curse him--he did not record a single imprecation against him--but he initiated the anathema. Nor was he slandered. His adversaries had come to clarify certain crucial religious matters. Paul's churches in Galatia (and possibly elsewhere) were visited by Christian Jews who preached at least a partial observance of Mosaic Law. Today, in normative Judaism, there is no such designation as a Christian Jew. (Jews for Jesus are not considered Jews by any recognized group in Judaism.) At the time of Paul, the Nazarene Church believed that Jesus was a messiah, not a deity, and that observance of Mosaic Law was incumbent on its adherents. This group was a sect of Judaism. It persisted as a small sect for three or four centuries after Paul until its members merged with Christianity or Judaism. Most became Christians. By the fifth century there were no more Judaizing Christians or Jewish Christians.

The immediate issue at hand was whether Christians of Gentile or Jewish background should observe Jewish law. Apparently missionaries from Jerusalem presented themselves and Paul as subject to the authority of the Jerusalem Church. Paul denied this and responded with vilification of his antagonists and their religious ideas.

Paul asserted that he received his commission directly from Jesus in a revelation and insisted on his complete independence from the Council in Jerusalem. He went on to complain that the problem arose because "false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves" (Gal. 2:4). Again these "false brothers" were none other than the Jerusalem Church and the Apostles that knew Jesus best! This idea is totally preposterous!

**The freedom Paul wanted was to distort the Torah by making spurious claims about it, such as insisting that the entire law must be obeyed in order for its followers to be in the covenant (receive salvation) and disregarding or denying the importance of repentance in Judaism for its adherents to achieve God's forgiveness (grace). This subversion of Judaism was offered to unsuspecting listeners like the Gentiles who had little or no prior understanding of Judaism in the first place.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this situation any different from the majority of Gentile Christians today?**

**Many of the people who came to hear Paul believed he represented the religion of the Jerusalem Church inasmuch as that was the central authority and original disseminator of the faith after Jesusμ death. Understanding that Gal. 1:18-24 and Gal. 2:6-9 were not in the original book of Galatians in the First New Testament in 150 A.D. such passages were "created" to bolster Pauline authority for his Torahless Gospel and portray him and his message as sanctioned by the Jerusalem Church before his Gentile audience. This is effective yet today but understand that these passages were not present until 180 A.D. when Irenaeus responds**

**to Marcion First New Testament with one of his own making. Let us see what "authority" for Paul was lacking in the first Galatians collected as we see what passages were simply not there:**

***Gal 1:18-24 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: 23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. 24 And they glorified God in me. (KJV)***

***Gal 2:6-9 6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. (KJV)***

**These passages were written much later to give a false "support" of Paul supposedly by the Jerusalem Church and this played in the hands of the Gentile Church, who without Paul, had no authority for their doctrines or their actions. As you can see as shown extensively on this website as well as others, Paul was not accepted but constantly under the inspection of the Jerusalem Church and was called on the carpet twice for his heretical views as seen in Acts 15 and Acts 21. For all his claims of independence, Paul was obliged to report to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15, Gal. 2:1-9). He had been reluctant to do this and had delayed visiting there for as long as he could. Accounts of Paul's preaching against the Torah had reached Jerusalem. The Council members were apparently disturbed enough to request his appearance before them and to send out envoys to clarify their position and to repudiate Paul's. If he indeed were not accountable to the Jerusalem Church, as he insisted, he would not have presented himself before it.**

**Paul recognized the implications for himself and his religion if the Galatians returned to Jewish practices. He met the danger head-on. He repeated the usual arguments of "justification by faith" and "no righteousness through law" and then pulled out all the stops as he resorted to hyperbole. He equated Judaism with enslavement. He rhetorically asked his listeners:**

***How is it you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you. (Gal. 4:9-11)***

**What Paul feared was the loss of his converts in Galatia and the spread of this trend to other towns and cities and churches. In the heat of battle Paul defended his turf against those from whom he has snatched it in *his* proselytizing. With his back to the wall, he responded with name-calling and malicious comparisons. He termed the laws "miserable principles" and the return to them, enslavement. The "slavery" Paul threatened for observing special occasions has long since been taken over by his Church. Instead of the Sabbath *day*, Christians subsequently designated Sunday as holy. As for a special *month* in which there are restrictions or limitations, the Church was not lax in instituting such a custom. For six weeks before Easter, during Lent, Christians give up certain foods and engage in other rites to commemorate Jesus' fasting in the wilderness. How different is this in terms of restrictions from the mourning period which Jews observe during the month of Av, a Hebrew month which usually falls in August. For three weeks before the Ninth of Av religious Jews refrain from swimming or celebrations in memory of the destruction of both Temples. Paul may have referred to the**

**first month of the Hebrew calendar as a special *season* for it marks the celebration of several holidays. Christians, likewise, enjoy a Christmas season which, for many, lasts well over a month. Although the Sabbatical *year* has not been incorporated into Christian theology, most academics eagerly avail themselves of its benefits. The observance of the sabbatical year in agriculture has proven beneficial to the earth and the fanners who depend on its produce whether or not they live by the Mosaic laws. Paul's warning of hardships--enslavement-- resulting from keeping special holy days and festivals by ritual practices was a red herring. Every nation, religion, and culture has its special events observed with specific rites or ceremonies that add a richness to the lives of the people and a uniqueness to the individual groups.**

**Good taste and fair play did not figure in Paul's preaching when he spoke of his opponents. He must have been in a rage when he wished "they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves." He was referring to his rivals who practiced and advocated circumcision (Gal. *5:12).***

**He accused the Judaizers of urging circumcision on his audience in order to become indistinguishable from the Jews and thereby to avoid persecution. The dishonesty of his claim was only surpassed by its irony in light of subsequent Jewish history. Both in Paul's time and afterward there was no record of Jewish persecution of Gentiles. Furthermore, the latter were welcome in their synagogues, a fact which caused Paul distress. In the course of history during which the Church reached ascendancy, Jewish men were identified by their circumcision for the purpose of Christian persecution.**

**In the same manner of verbal excess which he used in Galatians, Paul wrote in Phil. 3:2:**

***Watch out for those dogs, those who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.***

**Paul knew, either from his own experience since he claimed to be circumcised or from the many Jews he had met, that circumcision is not mutilation.**

**Paul's verbal assaults on his adversaries were often venomous, despite his avowal of love and the need for love of humanity. Although he said that the Spirit brought love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22), it didn't seem to have that effect on him: When he was dealing with opponents or competitors, his brotherly love disappeared into anathemas, name-calling, spurious accusations, and intimidation. His attacks showed neither restraint nor compassion. His extreme feelings and behavior project a picture of an unstable personality (Howard Kee, *op. cit.*, p. 217)**

**In the Epistle to the Colossians the author wrote of freedom from human regulations through life with Christ. The writer primarily reprimanded gnosticizing Christian tendencies, and secondarily, Judaizing tendencies.**

**This Epistle censures the worshipping of angels. The writer urged the Colossians to ignore talk of food and drink, festivals and the Sabbath day by people who worship angels (2:16-18). Within the context of the letter and the time it was written, this passage was not directed against Jews. Unfortunately, however, most non-scholars reading this letter generations and centuries later might well assume that Jews were the object of this criticism, inasmuch as they are principally associated with Sabbath observance and food restrictions. Since the author of Colossians connected the people who observed these practices with angel-worship, it seems necessary to note that Judaism forbids worshipping angels as it does people or another deity. In some pseudepigraphal writings there is mention of angels. This is precisely why such literature was unacceptable in the codified Jewish Scriptures.**

**The chief motivation for the Epistle to the Hebrews was the fear of Christian converts backsliding to Judaism. The author warned that a return to Judaism from Christianity would mean a permanent loss of salvation; there would be no second chance. "It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened...who have shared in the Holy Spin if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance because they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace" (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-3 1).**

***Heb 6:4-6 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly***

***gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (KJV)***

***Heb 10:26-31 26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (KJV)***

So we see that every technique available to the apostles was put into play to forestall the return of converts to Judaism or the participation in Jewish practices of Gentile Christians or Judaizing Christians. Paul expressed his determination to cut off access to his followers in his statement in 2 Cor. 11:12: "I will continue doing what I am doing to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be equal with us in the things they boast about." Christians were discouraged from any contacts, social or religious, with Judaizers and from continuing any Jewish observances alongside of Christian beliefs, for fear that such activity would weaken and undermine their Christian faith. These signs of insecurity are common among founders of new ideologies. They feel threatened and perceive the need to protect themselves by isolating their members from the established rival groups. Paul's efforts to prevent Jewish proselytizing and to preclude meaningful contacts between Jews and Christians set a precedent for his Church for hundreds of years after his death.

**Another factor here was Paul's personality and ambition. Paul was a go-getter, par excellence. He originated a concept and, like a latter-day entrepreneur, he developed the market for it. He was a master of public relations and endowed with all the skills that profession called for: community organization, public speaking, fund-raising, familiarity with the potential patrons, and enthusiasm for the product. He had resourcefulness and a keen awareness of the competition. He tried to prevent competition where he could and fought it aggressively elsewhere in order to retain his clientele and enlarge his market share. As one scholar put it, "When Paul became a Christian, he gained status and power in the Christian community which he protected fiercely, especially when his authority was at stake" (A. Saldarini, Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees, p. 143).**

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# LOOKING AT HOW PAUL MISUSED THE JEWISH OLD TESTAMENT IN HIS WRITINGS

**While these Jewish passages contained in the Hebrew Bible have strong relevance in their original context, they are often arbitrarily ascribed in the New Testament to people and happenings to which they have little or no connection.**

**The New Testament writers, including Paul, are guilty of the same mishandling and abuse of Jewish Scripture to create a new religion. Let me give you again the mechanics involved in textual manipulation whereby we end up with something different in meaning that the original author intended.**

- **Jewish texts and phrases are lifted out of their places in the Hebrew Scriptures and given meanings which, at best, are forced.**
- **Preceding many of the prophetic verses which are quoted is the assertion, "What was said through the prophet was thus fulfilled." in this way the writers of the Christian Scriptures endeavored to show that the Tanakh anticipated and predicted the events recorded in the New Testament.**
- **Those happenings, then, are presented as the fulfillment of the Hebrew Scriptures and are considered proof texts.**
- **The techniques employed to establish proof include citation of verses out of context, mistranslation, and misquotation.**
- **Sometimes a figurative or poetic phrase is mistaken for a straightforward statement and vice versa.**
- **Sometimes sayings of different writers, living in different places, and in different centuries are run together.**
- **Often two or more of these methods are used in a single quotation.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that your Old Testament in the King James Bible is not a faithful reproduction of the Jewish Bible and the Jewish Old Testament in hundreds of "key" places that alters completely various "theologies" from concepts involving Messiah to atonement?**

***It is almost unbelievable, but I was floored when I detected that my KJV was consistently misquoting and mistranslating on purpose the Old Testament when compared with the Jewish Hebrew Scriptures. The Old Testament in the KJV is supposed to be a faithful translation of the Jewish Scriptures. It is not. That is why I recommend to everyone that they purchase a Tanakh; either the Jewish Publication Society's Tanakh or the Stone Edition Tanakh. If you are truly one a search for truth this is mandatory because we cannot trust the KJV Bible for a faithful reproduction, let alone all the spin-off Bibles which have been built off it.***

**Answer for yourself: How many Greek scriptures in the New Testament, written as if they were a quotation of the Jewish Scriptures, have you looked up in the Hebrew scriptures in a Jewish Bible (Tanakh) and compared for accuracy in translation?**

**Notice I did not ask you if you compared your New Testament quote with the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, because often both will agree due to the corruption of the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures in 200 B.C.E. What you will find if you look into this matter is that your Christian Old Testament in your Christian Bible is not faithfully translated from the Tanakh or the Jewish Bible. Biblical concepts concerning the Messiah and atonement no less have been completely altered almost beyond recognition and a "false religious belief system" substituted and created in their place by such manipulation. The quoting of these "fraudulent" passages from the LXX is just another form of deception used by Paul and other Gentile writers of the New Testament in order create a theology which is less than truthful.**

**Answer for yourself: How many Greek scriptures in the New Testament, written if they were a quotations of the Jewish Scriptures, have you looked up in the Jewish Bible to make certain they are not used out of context, let alone if the New Testament writer uses the quote from the Jewish Scriptures correctly by maintaining the original intention and meaning that God intended in the original meanings of the text?**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that many Hebrew words are, unfortunately, often changed in the Greek and subsequently in English translations of our Bibles?**

**Answer for yourself: What does that do to the truth intended to be conveyed by the original Hebrew passage?**

**Unless you have investigated this subject for yourself like me and others, then you will be amazed at what you discover for yourself when you endeavor to fulfill such a pursuit.**

**Sometime Paul's quotes and thoughts, when compared with Moses and the Prophets, are so poorly translated as to be barely recognizable when compared with the originals. In this series of articles I will demonstrate for you beyond a doubt, that Paul's quotes from the existing Jewish Scriptures as taken from the Hebrew Bible are not based on the traditionally accepted Hebrew Masoretic Text, and often, are changed or misquoted in the Greek translation from which Paul will take them.**

**Answer for yourself: If the Holy Spirit is behind the "inspiration" and "inerrancy" of the New Testament then does God not know that these writings are butchered when compared with what He told Moses and the Prophets?**

**I will also show you that Paul repeatedly quotes not from the Jewish Scriptures, but from the less reliable Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible). I am confident that you will come to see, as I an many others have when devoting our lives to the study of the Bible, that often Paul's ideas, like much of his letters, are his own creations, similarly formulated to meet a particular unique need here and there. You will come to see that Paul's versions of Biblical quotations are usually remote from the original passages and meanings, thus giving them a different flavor and meaning which God never intended you have when God gave them to "holy men of old." You will come to see that such purposeful misquotations and mistranslations are not done innocently, but rather are purposeful in removing one from the Jewish faith (and the non-Jews relationship to God within it). Paul's use of the altered and changed passages only goes to show you that evidently he is not "a Pharisee of Pharisees" or he would have known of these "fraudulent" passages and not used them or else Paul was more concerning in preaching "another Gospel" that was not faithful to the Jewish tradition and their texts and ironically says all other truths are in his mind "another gospel." Multitudes have been deceived by him.**

**Dear reader, these new and foreign religious ideas unfortunately became dogma within Gentile Christianity and did almost irreparable harm in divorcing the Gentile manifestation of faith in God**

**from the manifestations of "the faith God intended we have." The things I will show you in this series of articles is not comforting to know, however, only in understanding such materials can we "cast out the leaven of the Pharisees" regardless of who they are or their private agendas.**

**One last thing; you might wonder what the end-result should be of such a series of studies. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that when you complete these articles the reader will be able to understand that Christianity is best understood and practiced from a Jewish viewpoint which restores the Sabbaths, Seven Biblical Festivals, true Messianism, and the truth about God's atonement and not man's substitute. Such emphasis is almost totally lacking in the Christian church today. Also, a renewed emphasis in proper tithing and righteous giving hopefully will replace the current perversion of giving as seen in most churches and televisions today. Let us begin…shall we?**

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# DOES PAUL CHANGE THE "FAITH OF JESUS" INTO A "FAITH ABOUT JESUS? YOU MUST DECIDE FOR YOURSELF

**Paul introduced the centrality of grace and faith, as distinguished from "works," along with the belief that “faith and grace” replaced the Torah and its injunctions for good deeds. This is a fact which is undeniable. Paul did much to transform Yeshua from a human Jewish messiah to a divine Greek Christ patterned after Attis and Mithra, the gods of pagan religions of his day.**

**His influence on at least one of the evangelists, Luke, and on most of the early Gentile Greek Fathers and their interpretation of the Gentile manifestations of the faith of Yeshua is well documented for those who seek such information. The early Gentile-Greek (catholic-universal) Church accepted and adopted Paul’s theological views and Paul’s attitude toward the Torah and Jews. This was not very difficult for them as most were already anti-Semitic themselves. The early Gentile Church’s Hellenistic background combined with the competition from Judaism as an established religion with its adamant followers, turned Paul's adherents into anti-Semites. They manifested the identical hostility for Jews and Judaism which characterized the ideological descendants five, ten, and twenty centuries later. The same basic factor was operative in evoking resentment in ancient Asia Minor as in medieval Europe and in modem day nations of the east and west. Fear and threat of competition from one's presumed competition (the Jews), whether in economic, political, or religious sphere, are powerful spurs to hatred.**

**Not easily noticed by the casual reader of the New Testament, Paul's epistles are characterized by a flood of Biblical quotations which are frequently garbled and often joined randomly to one another when compared to the originals.**

## HOW DID PAUL CHANGE THE RELIGION OF JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

**Let me give you again the mechanics involved in textual manipulation whereby we end up with something different in meaning that the original author intended.**

- **Jewish texts and phrases are lifted by Paul out of their places in the Hebrew Scriptures and given meanings which, at best, are forced.**
- **Preceding many of the prophetic verses which are quoted is the assertion, "What was said through the prophet was thus fulfilled." in this way the writers of the Christian Scriptures endeavored to show that the Tanakh anticipated and predicted the events recorded in the New Testament.**
- **Those happenings, then, are presented as the fulfillment of the Hebrew Scriptures and are considered proof texts.**
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**The techniques employed to establish proof include citation of verses out of context, mistranslation, and misquotation.**

- **Sometimes a figurative or poetic phrase is mistaken for a straightforward statement and vice versa.**
- **Sometimes sayings of different writers, living in different places, and in different centuries are run together.**
- **Often two or more of these methods are used in a single quotation.**

# SO WHAT DOES IT MATTER?

**Besides the quest for truth and an obedient life before God, there are numerous verses contained within the New Testament, which in and of themselves are not anti-Semite but are used to substantiate certain beliefs held by the early Gentile Church which have anti-Jewish implications. Carried out to the end-result these verses influence one's beliefs and conduct. Let me remind you that these verses are directly attributable to the murder of 6 million Jews during our century alone.**

**Upon the completion of this series of articles, you will see clearly how Paul misrepresents the Torah to his Gentile readers. Nothing has changed. Most who read my articles are "New Testament" Christians. It would have been far better to have been "Old Testament" Christians. Most Christians whom I have met over the last 15 years are deficient to say the least in knowledge about the Old Testament Jewish Scriptures. The reason is understandable. Coupled with their lack of study of the Jewish Scriptures, is the predominant practice of Christian Churches preaching mostly out of the Pauline corpus of literature Sunday after Sunday. No wonder we are unfamiliar with the Old Testament. One easily can see that with such a lack of Old Testament knowledge, we fall victim to Paul and others when reading the New Testament to their misquotations of the Jewish Scriptures as well as their use of texts taken out of context being used in ways never intended by the original authors. The true meaning of the Old Testament writer is lost in the process. More times than not these literary devices distort or totally corrupt the truth intended we know which was presented by the Old Testament writer. Such goes on without notice to the unknowledgeable New Testament Christian. We easily are led to accept the writing of Paul as authoritative, for after all it is included in the New Testament, isn't it? The problem is that we don't know if Paul has faithfully represented on the pages of the New Testament the truths originally given by Moses or the Prophets since we lack such foundational Old Testament knowledge. Since so many have so few Old Testament passages memorized as taken from the true Jewish Scriptures, when reading the New Testament and Pauline epistles we don't easily or quickly recognize the misquotations and distortions. They sure sound spiritual to the unsuspecting reader. Little thought crosses our minds that these cherished New Testament Scriptures, given to us by the Roman Church, could be in error and full of deception. For after all, we are talking about the Bible.**

**It is time to wise up and blow the Trumpet in Zion. All is not well with Paul and his writings. In the articles that follow I will make a substantial case demonstrating that the anti-Semitism of Paul prompted him to replace the Torah with faith only. The only problem is that today's scholarship records that at no time did Paul have over 50 converts during his years of ministry. The Messianic community continued to follow this trouble maker and were on his heels continuously eagerly "undoing" his teachings as soon as he was spreading them. When we read that "all in Asia have forsaken me" you should understand that a whole continent rejected him. When you read that he was "beaten by the Jews" be not mistaken, it was fellow-followers of Yeshua who took offense at his witness to lies, and in the name of Yeshua no less. This is the Paul of history, however, the New Testament portrays him differently. Let us not forget that history is written by winners and we should expect Paul to become the hero of the Christian Church especially since his three missionary journeys.**

**So it is time to investigate Paul and his doctrines line upon line, precept upon precept. May God guide us to**

does paul change the "faith of jesus" into a "faith about jesus"? you must decide for yourself

**truth and a more pleasing Biblical experience. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S MISREPRESENTATION OF THE JEWS AS GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

**A commonly misunderstood belief, mentioned in the Pentateuch, which was the target of Paul's indignation was that of the Chosen People. Paul and many Christians after him resented and misrepresented Jews because of their mistaken interpretation of the phrase which they imputed to Jews. Paul expressed hostility by accusing Jews of bragging about their "relationship to God" and "about the Law" in both Rom. 2:17 and 2:23:**

***Rom 2:17 17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, (KJV)***

***Rom 2:23 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? (KJV)***

**His anger over the boastfulness he attributed to them reached such a pitch that he lost sight of his original accusation: he expanded his charges to include, robbery, adultery, and idolatry as seen in Rom. 2:21-22.**

***Rom 2:21-22 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? (KJV)***

**What the Christian needs to understand is that Paul's real attack on Judaism was against the covenant (E. P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 47). As John Townsend succinctly put it, "In the Pauline epistles Jewish election had become meaningless" (John Townsend, article, "The Gospel of John and the Jews,' p. 75).**

**As a consequence of accepting the Torah and the responsibilities which its laws imposed on them, Israel saw itself in a special relationship to God Who had presented the Law to them through Moses. Exactly how the commandments were transmitted to Moses, whether through direct dictation or inspiration is, of course, unknown, and its explanation depends on one's religious orientation. There are those who consider the ability to assemble such a body of rules governing human behavior, the talent to convey them to others, and the charisma to persuade a whole nation to accept them, a result of genius, which, in itself, is viewed as God-given.**

**Whichever way the Law came to the Hebrews at Sinai, there is no doubt that it has been seen by its believers as sacred, binding, and an integral part of the covenant between God and Israel. The sticking point for some non-Jews is the conviction that Jews consider themselves *superior* because they were chosen by God. Chosenness, however, works both ways. It is not only a case of God choosing Israel but of the latter accepting God and Torah as their Lord and Law. The story is told in the Midrash of God offering the Torah to several nations, all of whom refused it. Only Israel accepted it without even asking its contents. Israel had such faith in its divine source that the nation did not inquire about its contents. This is the ultimate in faith.**

**By accepting the Law, Israel incurred the obligation to abide by and be loyal to it. And, as with any contract, the people were held accountable. They were obliged to live up to a high standard of morality or lose that particular closeness and connection with God which was implicit in the covenant. The promise imposed a responsibility to perform. The fulfillment provided the other half of the agreement: God's acceptance of them as His people. The special relationship which Torah-oriented Jews feel toward God is based on the phrase, "1 will take you to Me for a people and I will be to you a God" (EX 6:7). This does not exclude other people from joining that covenant nor does it exclude the righteous outside the covenant from salvation.**

**Like so many aspects of life, being part of the Chosen People has a trade-off. The burden of taking on certain obligations also brings rewards. In this case, it is the satisfaction of living up to a divinely-mandated duty. This is a far cry from boastfulness. Bragging is not usually found among people trying to behave according to a set of ethical principles. However, there is no contradiction that people take a justifiable pride in achieving certain goals or in living up to certain standards. The pride lies in *adhering* to the Torah rather than in the selection to do so.**

## *Chosenness, thus, is more a mark of responsibility than of favor.*

**While there is no reason to boast, neither is there cause to hide the gratification which comes from receiving this God-conferred gift and obeying it. Actually, the people were accepted because they promised to follow the commands. This, then, was the basis of chosenness.**

**If there was a feeling of superiority, it was to the idolatrous ideas of pagans. Christians affected this attitude and developed it to a high degree through their proselytizing activities among "non-believers." Following Paul's example, his religious heirs established missions all over the world, in an effort to convert the heathens and relieve them of their idolatry. Nor did they stop at pagans. Again, conforming to Paul's mode of operation, as in 1 COR 9:20 and in Acts, Christians have engaged in widespread efforts to convert all people including monotheists, such as Jews and Moslems, to their faith which they judge to be superior to all other religions. E.P. Sanders, in his Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, relates on page 198, that "Paul was trying to bring the Jews into the Gentile fold. He did not engage in a thoroughly Jewish task of bringing the Gentiles into the Jewish people of God as the Covenants of the Old Testament indicate. This was Paul's fatal mistake and the tragic fruit of such disobedience is with us today as seen in the many paganistic practices involved in Gentile Christianity. This tragic error is magnified when a Jew converts to Christianity because by default he become an idolater and such is the most tragic of sins a Jew can commit.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this not a form of arrogance of which Jews stand accused in Paul's letter?**

**The apostle's accusation--that Jews are conceited about being the Chosen People--has been accepted by generations of Christians despite the lack of empirical support in Jewish writings and actions. Yet, while ascribing an arrogance to Jews, they saw no such trait characterizing their own proselytizing activities and forced conversions. In Paul's epistle to the Romans, Paul wrote sometimes about Jews and more often about Jewish background Christians or Judaizers. In his other letters to the Galatians, Philippians and Corinthians, his primary focus was on Judaizers. However, few persons apart from scholars possess the knowledge and critical capacity to be aware of the distinctions. Paul's attacks on Judaizers had Judaism as their ultimate target for he opposed Jewish practices. This is rather amazing for a Pharisee of Pharisees as Paul presents himself. As Lloyd Gaston stated, "Canonization of the letters determined an anti-Jewish reading of them in all subsequent Christianity," quoted in The Origins Of Anti-Semitism, by John Gager, p. 191. We have a perfect example in this regard as concerning Paul and the Chosen people of God.**

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# PAUL'S INCONSISTENT TEACHINGS ON CIRCUMCISION

**Paul brought to his new religion a great emphasis on faith. In numerous verses in the Epistles (Romans 4, Galatians 3, Hebrews 11), Paul and other apostles endeavored to prove the importance of Abraham's faith as dissociated from his deeds. What you need to know that this was a common ploy of the Gnostics where they used for their examples pre-Mosaic figures to illustrate their theological positions; thus the importance of Abraham for Paul. Paul's constantly recurring theme was that the Patriarch believed God's promise to him as faith. What Paul fails to tell his reading audience is that Abraham showed his faith in God in much more significant ways, such as by leaving his homeland at the Almighty's command and obeying His command to get circumcised at the tender age of 99. Paul, of course, did not offer the above examples as signs of Abraham's faith in God.**

**Answer for yourself: Why didn't Paul use these above examples of Abraham's faith in his epistles?**

- **In the first case, Paul would not want to draw attention to the Jewish nationalistic implications in the migration of the first Hebrew to the Promised Land.**
- **The second example, of having himself circumcised, along with his entire household, while a vivid show of faith and obedience in deeds, was exactly what Paul wanted to underplay, if not undermine.**

## CIRCUMCISION

**The religious rite of circumcision is an external, physical sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendants. The word in Hebrew is *brit* which, significantly, means covenant. This is how the covenantal relationship is expressed in Genesis:**

***I will establish My covenant (brit) between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God unto you and to your seed after you (17:7).***

***This is My covenant which you shall keep...every male among you shall be circumcised (17:10).***

**Answer for yourself: Is the timing of Abraham's circumcision important?**

**For Paul the timing of Abraham's circumcision was of prime importance to prove that he demonstrated his faith in having a son before his circumcision. Paul's emphasis on when Abraham got the word of Sarah's imminent conception of Isaac played a major role in his dogma. Here is what Paul said in ROM 4:9-10:**

***Is this blessedness only for the circumcised or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was righteousness credited to Abraham after he was circumcised or before?***

## *It was not after but before!*

In view of Paul's assertions and the convictions in Christianity based on his declaration, it might prove enlightening, though disconcerting, to believers of this doctrine to read Gen. 17 and 18:1-15.

**Chapter 17 starts with an announcement by God of His covenant with Abram and His promises to the Patriarch to make him the father of a multitude of nations. Consequent to that pledge God changed his name to Abraham. Then He told Abraham that to keep the covenant, he and his descendants must be circumcised. After receiving instructions for circumcising himself and his household, Abraham was told that his wife's name was changed (from Sarai to Sarah), and that she would bear him a son.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the Patriarch's reaction to this news? Did he believe it?**

**The Bible tells us he fell on his face laughing as he said to himself, *"Shall a child be born to him who is a hundred years old and shall Sarah who is ninety years old bear?"* (GEN 17:17).**

**Then, aloud, he asked God if His promise might be fulfilled through Ishmael! Alas, Abraham despaired of having a child with Sarah. He was only human. If, after so many years they had no child, he had reason to doubt that now, in their old age, he and his wife could produce a son. The vaunted faith of Abraham in God's promise of the birth of Isaac was, on examination, quite weak! But this was not counted against him by God. There is no comment about it in the text.**

So much for Abraham's faith.

**Answer for yourself: Now for the timing: was it before or after circumcision? Let us read on.**

**The sequence of events shows that Abraham was told to have a brit or circumcision before he was told that he would have a child.** Abraham, as a paradigm of obedience to God's word, had himself, his son, Ishmael, and all the men of his household circumcised **"in the self- same day as God had spoken to him."** **Thus ends Chapter 17. Chapter 18 commences with a visit of angels who announce to Abraham and Sarah that she would bear a son the following year. This time she has doubts and asks the same question that her husband did in the previous chapter. Not only that, she laughs too! There was so much laughter, no wonder they named the boy Yitzhak, which means, "he shall laugh" in Hebrew.**

Thus, the basis of Paul's characterization of Abraham as the model of faith is questionable, if not flawed. This does not mean that Abraham did not have faith in God. He demonstrated his trust in God in much more substantive ways--by obeying His commands unhesitatingly and unquestioningly. But, if there was one episode in his life in which he showed doubt, it was in the belief that Sarah could bear him a son. The main concern for Abraham and the Torah in general is **compliance** with God's commandments. It is unfortunate that Paul laid so much emphasis on such a trivial matter as Abraham's reaction to God's promise. It is trivial in terms of the Genesis account of the story. Paul missed or overlooked the main trait of the Patriarch because of his prejudice against the Law and his bias against circumcision--and his zeal to show that faith was more important than deeds.

**Paul betrayed that bias and prejudice in the continuation of his address in ROM 4:11:**

***And he received circumcision as a sign and seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he***

***was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised in order that righteousness might be credited to them.***

**What an inversion of facts! Abraham did not receive circumcision as he would receive a sheep or a camel. He arranged to have it done to himself and did it to others. His faith responded in obedience and works.**

**Answer for yourself: Were his servants and other men in his household also getting a sign and seal of righteousness? Circumcision was a sign of the covenant with God. The sign of righteousness in it was obedience to God's command--one which Paul was urging his followers to disobey.**

## *Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)*

**The most bare-faced lie, as well as the greatest irony, in Paul's theory is his designation of the first man to be circumcised in accordance with God's commandment as the father of the uncircumcised! Lastly, no righteousness is credited to another person because Abraham obeyed God and got circumcised. Each individual must fulfill his own duties to get "credit." Furthermore, the text in Genesis states clearly and repeatedly that every male in future generations must have this rite performed.**

**Paul confused circumcision with observance of other laws in the Torah. He argued that a circumcised transgressor of the Law became as one who had not been circumcised (ROM 2:25). Obviously, Paul meant that in a spiritual, not bodily, sense. No verse in the Tanakh claimed that circumcision absolved a man from obeying other laws in the Pentateuch nor excused him for infringing on them. Circumcision was never presented or interpreted as a substitute for observance of other injunctions. Paul's argument is comparable to claiming that a citizen in today's society who pays his income taxes but violates traffic regulations is as one who had not paid his taxes to the state. One has nothing to do with the other. The person who discharged his obligation to the government has not reincurred a tax debt because of another, unrelated, trespass; but he is still liable for the violation of any other law. Paul's jumbled reasoning confuses the matter. And his repeated intimations, despite all the evidence to the contrary in the Torah, that Jews considered circumcision a substitute for obedience to other laws, is patently false. As E.P. Sanders wrote, "Romans 2 remains the instance in which Paul goes beyond inconsistency to true self-contradiction" (E.P. Sanders, Paul the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 147). In this chapter Paul said that the sole basis of salvation is obeying the Law and then proceeded to oppose one of the requirements of the Law. Another scholar, Heikke Raisanen, has remarked about the famous apostle, "Paul, the theologian, is a less coherent and less convincing thinker than is commonly assumed" (Heikke Raisanen, quoted in Paul the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 148).**

**In ROM 2:17 to 3:8 Paul demands obedience and then objects when Jews or Jewish Christians obey the oracles God gave them. Paul follows his contradiction with another non sequitur. He says that people should obey God but they should not expect their obedience to lead to divine acceptance! This is mumbo-jumbo! For no matter what they do, God has accepted them and Jesus' death has assured them of forgiveness and salvation (Howard Kee, Understanding the New Testament, pp. 231-232).**

**Answer for yourself: Can Paul keep a straight thought? It appears not!**

**Paul expressed the whole gamut of ideas on the value of circumcision:**

- **Indifference...1 Cor 7:19 19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. (KJV)**
- **Denying it has any value...Gal 5:6 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (KJV)**

**Asserting it has value...Rom 3:1-2 1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. (KJV)**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see the contradictions in what Paul is saying? What really is the truth on the matter as Paul cannot seem again to keep a straight thought on an issue? Is this the work of the Holy Spirit who is anointing Paul to write this stuff?**

**Paul's asserting the value of circumcision as a commandment of God comes on the heels of verses in ROM 2 in which he reversed and contradicted himself again.**

**Circumcision is linked to the Torah and Judaism as baptism is to the New Testament and Christianity. Just as it is a rare phenomenon to become unbaptized, so it is virtually unheard of to become uncircumcised. Paul knew this. His purpose was to attack the Law. Since circumcision was a fundamental part of it and a major issue for adult converts, Paul directed his barbs at the practice. How ironic then to read in 1 COR 7:19, "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commandments is what counts."**

**Answer for yourself: For one who teaches the abolition of the Law due to the sacrifice of Christ don't you find it rather hypocritical that he would say the "keeping the Commandments is what counts?"**

**One final observation on this subject merits comment. Paul paid an inordinate amount of attention to circumcision representing it as an unreasonable and demanding requirement in the Pentateuch to which Jews stubbornly clung. Considering that for the past 4000 years Jews have been circumcised, for the last thirteen centuries Moslems have performed this rite, and for the last fifty years about half of the Christians living in the West have undergone this procedure, it is hard to make a case today for its rigor and hardship. Of course, adult circumcision, at a time when there were no narcotics, was far more intimidating than circumcision on an infant or on an adult under anesthesia. Paul was addressing adults whose feats of the pain and infection he sympathized with and encouraged by his attacks on the procedure. He opposed it for the non-Jews to whom he was preaching even when they were willing to undergo it.**

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# PAUL'S CONFLICTING VIEWS ON THE LAW...WHAT IS GOING ON?

**Paul's concern to undermine the Law was close to an obsession and of course this was necessary to accommodate his Gnostic ideas. For, in order to replace the Law with his teachings and "his gospel" which we previously saw came not as he stated in Romans 1:2-3 "through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures," he devoted his life to construct a case against it as the way to righteousness. But he was in a bind. As the builder, developer, and inventor of' Christianity, he found himself' in the peculiar position of both depending on and having to denigrate the Jewish Scriptures. Paul was in a difficult position since having to use the Jewish Scriptures to legitimize his claims and his gospel, yet at the same time often twisting the words and their meaning in the process to bring meanings totally foreign from what the original writers of the Jewish Scriptures intended.**

## PAUL HAS A UNIQUE PROBLEM ON HIS HANDS

**Paul was very cleaver. He strategy was to both call on the Tanakh to validate his statements, while at the same time to misrepresent them to this audiences who were for the most part totally ignorant concerning them. This was like taking candy from a baby. The confusion for the typical Christian lies in the recognition that Paul some of the time acknowledged the Jewish Scriptures, their prestige and value. He even admitted, with a grudging ambivalence, some of the qualities of' the "law" in Rom. 7:7, 12, 14, 16.**

**Rom 7:7**

***7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (KJV)***

**Rom 7:12**

***12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. (KJV)***

**Rom 7:14**

***14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (KJV)***

**Rom 7:16**

***16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. (KJV)***

**However, at times opposite views of the Law suited Paul better and he found himself required to denounce the Torah and the Jewish Scriptures, which being an essential part of his own Bible, was fundamental to both Yeshua and Judaism. So, Paul not only supported his brand of Christianity on Judaism, but would at various times try to destroy it in the process of establishing a new faith on the remains and the ashes**

of its predecessor.

# OBSTACLES THAT PAUL OVERCOMES IN OPPOSING THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES AND TORAH

One of the first obstacles that Paul had to overcome in his opposition to the Torah, especially for his Gentile converts, is that the Jewish Scriptures were included in his letters which would later, following his death, be incorporated into the New Testament in the Christian Bible. **The entire Hebrew Bible was canonized by the Church.** This oscillation of Paul concerning his views on the Law along with his inconsistency in his writings where we see him one moment accepting and then later rejecting the Law is a reflection of Paul's unstable religious belief system. **If one will read the New Testament closely and slowly, while looking for such discrepancies, one will be overcome with Paul's contradictory statements about the Law and the Torah.** Paul's mutually opposing ideas are vividly exemplified in various verses in his letter to the Romans. **As E.P. Sanders expressed it,**

***"How can Paul say both that Christians die to the law (7:4) and that the law is to be upheld (3:21) and fulfilled (8:4, 13:8-10) or that God gave the law and it brings sin and death, (8:2)."*** **(E.P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 85).**

**Sadly, these contradictions are a mirror image of the Church's attitude toward the Hebrew Bible and Jews. This is Christianity's heritage from the pen of Paul.** The self-made apostle denounced the Law with charges that ran the gamut from claims that observance would not bring righteousness to charges that the Law brought God's wrath and curse, and eventually, death. **Years ago when I did not know the New Testament very well, or the Jewish Scriptures in the Old Testament, I would continually go to church and hear such derogatory statements made by my preacher concerning the Law.** He had been brainwashed by Paul as I had. He like me must have had a deficient understanding of the Old Testament in order to miss such conflicting statements concerning Paul's view on the Law. **The answer for me came over several years where I undertook a serious study of the Old Testament whereby I came to understand what it actually taught.** Then when this knowledge and understanding was compared to what Paul said in the New Testament then it was easy to see that the views of Moses, the Prophets, and even Jesus concerning the Law were completely contradictory to Paul's view of the Law. **As I continued my studies over the years I learned for myself that the very same Pauline letters which expressed Paul's opposition to the Law and his condemnation of it ironically contained statements from Paul that were the complete opposite in that they also contained passages supporting the Law.** I quickly began to see for myself that one moment Paul was condemning the Law and the next moment he was saying that the Law is holy, righteous, spiritual, and good! This is the fruit of a schizophrenic mind.

**As we continue our articles I wish to address a topic or topics from the pen of Paul concerning the Law which are presented within the New Testament from the pen of Paul which are considered as "truth" by Christianity, but which can, upon intense examination, be shown to be flawed and misrepresented.**

# PAUL'S CRITICISM OF THE LAW

**Let us conclude this first article with one of Paul's criticisms , since there are many more of them than accolades. Paul states;**

- Therefore no one will he declared righteous in his (God's) sight by observing the law. (Rom. 3:20)
- Clearly no one is justified before God by the law... (Gal. 3:11)

Paul's claim that the Torah could not bring righteousness is a **contradiction of the message of the entire Hebrew Bible,** which, it will be recalled is considered sacred in Christianity. Throughout the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible consisting of the Law, Prophets, and Writings) the Israelites were assured repeatedly that righteousness would result from observing the Laws and Commandments of God (the Torah). **Deuteronomy 6:25 attests to this guarantee:**

***And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.***

**Similar thoughts are found in other Biblical books such as in I Kings 2:3 in which David imparted his last advice and charge to his son, Solomon, before he died:**

***Keep the charge of the Lord your God to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, commandments, ordinances, and testimonies, as written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.***

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul's writings contradict these two verses as taken from the Jewish Old Testament? They sure do.**

From Paul's premise that righteousness did not come from the Torah regardless of what Moses or David said, but from faith. Not only did the Law have no positive value for Paul, but it actually brought on sin and transgression. **A sample of his remarks on the cause of sin follows in our next article:**

***through the law comes the knowledge of sin (Rom.3:20)***

***for apart from the law sin is dead (Rom. 7:8)***

**The above citations give the impression that the world knew nothing of sin until the Hebrews defined it in Torah. That is not true! Genesis is full of stories about the sins of its protagonists. Most of the events in it, according to Scripture, occurred before the laws were bestowed on Israel. Beginning with the first family of the Bible, we read about the misdeeds of Adam, Eve, and Cain for which the parents were expelled from the Garden of Eden and the son was condemned to be a wanderer on the earth. The wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah is vividly described as well as their destruction -- as punishment for the sins of the inhabitants. From the beginning of Genesis to the end there are accounts of sinful behavior. Wickedness was known, recognized, and punished long before the advent of the Law at Sinai.**

**The Torah confirmed many of the basic values about human behavior which had evolved in the course of human existence on earth. It clarified and spelled out what was expected of people and set standards to strive for. The Law described and forbade sin, but did not invent or introduce it.**

## AN EXAMPLE OF PAUL'S IRRATIONALITY

**The next stage in Paul's case against the Law is seen in his statement, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression" (Rom 4:14). So, unless an act is specifically defined as a breach of the law, the transgressor is not responsible. If we follow this reasoning to its logical conclusion, we are left with an absurdity compounded by an outrage. In Hitler's Germany there was no law against murdering lows. Hence, in accordance with Paul's thinking, the annihilation of six million Jews was not a transgression. The people didn't know it was a sin because there was no law against it. Aside from Paul's perverted thinking -- if there is no law or you don't know it, it isn't wrong -- this line of reasoning is a strong argument for laws. It becomes a moral imperative to have**

**legislation to counteract such ideas. However, despite Paul's philosophy, there are laws of morality whether or not they have been committed to paper. A moral and just society will inevitably legislate ethical laws and provide for their enforcement as well as deterrence by appropriate punishment for violations. Assuring salvation and forgiveness of sins to wrongdoers on the basis of their profession of faith is not a deterrent. It could have the opposite effect and encourage further breaches of the law. Additionally, guarantees of grace in exchange for faith do not render compensation or justice to the injured.**

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# PAUL'S VIEWS ON THE LAW AS CONTRASTED WITH MOSES' AND THE PROPHETS'

**In Rom. 5:20 Paul said:**

***The law was added so that trespass might increase.***

**This thought conjures up a picture of the Law as a trap. People are enticed into accepting it in order to catch them when they deviate. Then they become transgressors. This is a variation on the theme Paul expressed in ROM 4:15: no law, no sin.**

**Paradoxically, though, Paul saw sin all over--with or without the Law. His idea of sin was a generalized condition under which all mankind labors. This is quite a contrast to the approach toward sin in the Torah. The Torah is concerned with concrete aces of humans done to others and defiance of theological injunctions. Paul's concept of sin was more abstract. Because Adam sinned in disobeying God's commands, Paul postulated that all mankind was horn under the shadow of this sin. The Christian concept of Original Sin and the Fall of Man stand in sharp contrast to the Rabbinical idea of Original Virtue as expressed in the belief of "zekhut avot." This Hebrew term means the virtue or merit of the Fathers and refers to the beneficial influence of righteous ancestors on subsequent generations. The Talmud considers the goodness of such men as Abraham, Moses, and Samuel as assuring God's compassion on their descendents. Paul's notion of sin may have a remote connection to the concept of the evil inclination or "yetzer hara" that the rabbis believed was present in humans. However, they also maintained that people are endowed with a good inclination or "yetzer tov." The aim, is for the good to gain mastery over the evil and such "training" is accomplished in life by the effort expended in trying to live the Commandments of God.**

**According to the doctrine of Original Sin an infant at birth is not innocent; he carries with him the original sin which can only be removed by baptism although human weakness and proneness to depravity remain in him. The Torah does not contain such an esoteric view of sin. The Five Books of Moses are not philosophic. They are pragmatic and straightforwardly tell people what is expected of them. Doing good deeds, which is part of obedience to the Law, keeps the person upright and right with God. Sin or transgression consists of not doing what the laws prescribe; which means the person has strayed off the path. There is no vague cloud of sin hanging over the Jewish spiritual landscape.**

## PAUL'S UNBALANCED VIEW OF THE LAW AS APPLIED TO NON-JEWS AND JEWS

**Paul claimed that knowing the Law and not fulfilling its tenets brought more sin than not knowing it.**

**As a result, Jews who had the Law and did not live up to it were subject to dire penalties while Gentiles, who did not know it, were exonerated for infractions of the moral code. Jews were subject to a double jeopardy according to his theory. Not only wore they liable to punishment for sins but they could never live up to the Law. It was too stringent and demanding. The Law was a "Catch-22." According to Paul Jews were obligated to obey that which was impossible. And just to add to this anomaly, Paul claimed in Phil 3:6 that he was "blameless" in following the law. This certainly implies that he had none of the difficulties in following it about which he cautioned his converts.**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul is "blameless" in following the Law then can you explain the difficulty within himself that he express below?**

***Rom 7:18-23 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (KJV)***

**Nevertheless, let us take Paul's arguments one by one and also note, in passing, to whom he directed them. Paul wrote to different audiences. Much of Roman was addressed to Judaizing Christians. Galatians was written to Gentiles or Gentile God-fearers whom Paul was vigorously pursuing as converts and whose interest in and attraction to Judaism he wanted to discourage. Regardless of the community he addressed, Paul did not limit his attacks to the beliefs of its members. He also denounced the Law which, as the basis of Jewish belief and practice, was an attack on Judaism and its adherents-the Jews.**

**There are basic laws of morality and decency to which all humans are subject according to the Bible. They were given expression in the Seven Noachic Laws in Genesis. It is easy to get hung up here on theoretical discussions of what constitutes morality. To paraphrase a judge in a pornography case, we may not always be able to define immorality, but we know it when we see it. And most people have no difficulty in recognizing what the phenomenon was in Sodom and Gemorrah or Auschwitz and Treblinka. Even if laws mandating ethical and humane conduct are not on the books, it does not follow that people are morally justified, at least before a "higher court," of violating those precepts. From the viewpoint of' both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures there is an assumption of divine justice for sins. The principle has been formalized in the United States in the words, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." Nor could the Gentiles Paul was addressing plead, in good conscience, ignorance as an excuse for not observing a moral code despite the apostle's assurances. Certain behavior is incumbent on all people.**

**Paul's polemic against the Law continued as he proclaimed, "The power of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56). Whether due to his zeal in seeking converts or his ignorance of the contents of the laws (of which he claimed intimate knowledge), Paul overlooked the Law as a power against sin. Both through its prohibitions of certain behavior and its requirements for positive acts of generosity and kindness, the Torah endeavored to eliminate transgression and encourage benevolence. Paul labeled a body of laws with the name of the conduct it tried to avoid.**

**Still another of the baffling charges made by Paul against the Law was that it was made for sinners, not for the law-abiding. 1 Timothy is a document inspired by, and developed out of, Paul's thoughts on the Torah (although it contradicted other ideas of his). We read in 1:8-11:**

***We know that the law is good if a man uses it properly. We also know that the law is made not for good men, but for law-breakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and***

***perjurers--and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.***

**Answer for yourself: If the law was made for such a collection of malefactors, is it likely that they would use it properly?**

**It seems that they would be more inclined to ignore or bypass the law. It would be a credit to any legal system which prevented such criminal behavior. It is, however, the function of a legal code to preclude, wherever possible, crime and to bring transgressors to justice. Apparently, Paul's teaching and preaching inspired this view of the Law in many of his followers. The advocates of the Law can find inadvertent praise of it in the words of such opponents and proudly support its accomplishments.**

**Just as his listeners might have begun to tire of one set of accusations, Paul presented them with another. From charges that the Law encouraged sin, he escalated his onslaught to claims that it brought wrath and a curse. The following quotations are examples of Paul's negative remarks on the subject:**

- **because law brings wrath (ROM *4:15*)**
- **All who rely on observing the law are under a curse (GAL 3:10)**
- **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law (GAL 3:13)**

**The wrath and the curse were, in Paul's view, the result of the sin incurred by those who accepted the Noachic or Mosaic Law and breached it. This depiction made the Law seem like a monster waiting to swoop down on unwary and unfortunate believers.**

**Answer for yourself: Is there any legitimate basis for Paul's characterization? Did Israel's violation of the Law lead to wrath?**

**The Torah helped form the Israelite tribes into a nation and gave it a uniqueness and cohesion. Periodic neglect of its laws and principles seemed to result in a loss of morale and a weakening of the people's sense of distinctiveness and destiny. Without this awareness of purpose and identity, they were vulnerable to assimilation and conquest. The prophets in the Bible and Jewish leaders afterward attributed the people's defeat and exile to their forsaking the Torah and all that this implied. Paul's solution for avoiding the consequences which come from deviating from the Law was abandoning it altogether. His philosophy extended from "no law, no sin" to "no wrath." His proposal, if followed, constituted self-annihilation for Jews. If they would no longer be responsible for practices and ceremonies identified with Judaism, they would cease to exist as Jews. Those who renounced the Torah gave up their separate identity, their continuity with the past, and their unique destiny as members of the "Holy Nation," that treasured people who have a special relationship with God. This is one way of sidestepping the challenges of abiding by the customs and precepts of the laws. For many, however, Paul's cure was by far, worse than the problem, even when observance entailed persecution.**

**However, Paul raised another, and more philosophical, question in his writings. He felt that the law can tell people what is right but it gives them no power to overcome the yetzer hara or evil inclination within them. Although the Law did not uproot the evil in people, it gave them a means of choosing the good or the yetzer hatov. (Ephraim Urbach, The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs, p. 472). Studying Torah and doing good deeds help a person combat the evil impulse. Man's victory by the grace of God over the yetzer hara is effected by his efforts to oppose it. (S. Schechter, Some Aspects Of Rabbinic Theology, p. 310).**

**Paul expressed concern that God's law which was meant to lead to life was overcome by Sin which caused the law and its followers to fail in realizing God's will. In other words, according to Paul's formulation, Sin is beyond God's control and humanity is also outside of His power. To solve this**

dilemma, Paul postulated that since God didn't succeed with the Law, He provided for salvation by sending Jesus. Through the Spirit mankind would then be saved **(E. P. Sanders, Understanding The New Testament, pp. 231-232).**

**By contrast the Talmudic rabbis recognized the concept of good versus evil, but this dualism in no way corresponds to the dualism of body and soul as Paul expressed due to his Gnostic beliefs. The sages of Rabbinical literature did not believe that the evil inclination resided in the body and the good impulse, yetzer hatov, in the soul. This Hellenistic view found its sharpest and most popular expression in the words of Paul. Ephraim Urbach points out that the body-soul dichotomy was an idea current in the Hellenistic world and also in Jewish Hellenism. But it was not at all accepted in normative Judaism and that means Paul was outside "normative" Judaism. Evidently again it is hard to reconciled Paul's beliefs about the Law with his testimony of being a "Pharisee or Pharisees" (E. Urbach, The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs, p. 144-162). Paul's views were conditioned by Hellenistic pessimism in which humans had no control over outside forces (E. P. Sanders, Ibid., p. 152) as well as his Gnostic leanings upon several of their main theological doctrines of this dichotomy between soul/flesh and spirit.**

# PAUL'S SOLUTION FOR HIS VIEW OF THE LAWS' INADEQUACY

**Paul's solution for the inadequacy of the Law to root out wickedness in people was to substitute a belief in Christ. We do not have to look beyond the headlines in today's newspaper to realize that the apostle's recommendation has not provided the answer to this age old problem. In dealing with evil in individuals or countries, governments have resorted to establishing standards by means of laws and ethics which brings us back to the principles of Torah. The Pentateuch stresses the responsibility of people for their behavior and the choice they have between right and wrong actions. This interpretation imparts to people a sense of greater control over their fate and reduces the feeling of helplessness.**

**Before leaving the subject of Paul's view of sin and his unique views on it's remedy, let us note that the term had different meanings according to its users. For the prophets and rabbis sins were avoidable transgressions against God's commandments for which wrongdoers were supposed to repent, atone, and perform acts of retribution. For Paul, even when he did refer to specific transgressions as in Gal. 5:19-21, Sin was a pervasive condition from which only faith in Christ could bring relief.**

As Paul's attacks on the Law reached a climax, he thundered his ultimate accusation: it brought death. Here are some characteristic verses containing this allegation:

- I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death (Rom. 7:10).
- through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).
- for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone...(2 Cor. 3:6-7).

Again, Paul, in contrast to the teachings of the Jewish Bible, told his respondents that adherence to the laws did not bring salvation (life). He now added that it brought death to Jews. It has already been shown above how the former assertion is a denial of words and messages in the Tanakh. The latter allegation--that the Law brings death--is also directly contradicted by verses in the Torah which assure the Hebrews:

- You shall therefore keep My statutes and ordinances which if a man does, ***he shall live by them***. I am the Lord (Lev. 18:5).
- And now, 0 Israel, hearken unto the statutes and ordinances, which I teach you, to do them;

***that you may live...*(Deut. 4:1).**

**Paul seemed to imply that any infraction brought automatic death, an assumption obviously not supported by observable evidence in the passages of the Jewish Bible. He also inferred that Gentiles who failed to abide by any laws in the Torah, even those related to ethical behavior, would be exempt from divine punishment.**

**This is a reversal of views which he expressed in Gal. 519-23.** **There he recited a litany of sins from sexual immorality to idolatry, and from envy to drunkenness which would deprive the sinner of the kingdom of God. He asserted that those who "belong to Christ" have purged these wrongs from their nature. This might have been true for Paul's contemporary followers. Empirical evidence would challenge this assertion for subsequent generations.**

**Alongside his attacks on the Torah Paul expressed both approval and praise of it. His confusion or ambivalence is reflected in these statements in Romans:**

- **What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Far from it! (7:7)**
- **So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good (7:12).**
- **We know the law is spiritual....(7: 16)**
- **Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law (13:10).**

**Despite these positive statements, Paul returned to his basic philosophy and threw the greater part of his considerable energy and tortuous reasoning into discrediting the Law. He rejected it as a means of salvation and wavered in his evaluation of it even as an ethical guide for his converts. For if it were valid and true (i.e., observance led to kindness and goodness and it was irrevocable since it came from God), then there would be no need for his new religion. Paul unconsciously disclosed this realization when he said:**

## *If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing (Gal. 2:21).*

**If Paul's new ideas and radical divergence from Judaism were not accepted, he also would not be accepted in a leadership role. Despite his repeated claims to having been a Pharisee (Acts 23:6, 26:5, Phil. 3:5), he had long departed from the mainstream of (Pharisaic) Judaism where he found no prestige or position of power. Within the Nazarene cult of Judaism he was a mere functionary with little influence. By leaving the establishment and striking out on his own, he could build his own religious domain where he reigned supreme. He had to persuade his listeners of the righteousness that only came through faith in Jesus and the salvation which his death brought them. Thus we find the need for his synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism). If Paul's interpretation of Jesus' death were not valid, these promises of salvation which he held out to the people would not be realized and would be understood as false. His assurances of righteousness, salvation, and grace without deeds (such as even the minimal requirements of the Noachic laws) were seductive, especially to a Gentile audience while the threats of curses, wrath, and death were fearsome. It was not too difficult for Paul to convince his Hellenistic listeners of the meaning with which he invested the death of Jesus. They were familiar with that interpretation from their heathen beliefs.**

**Closely related to the saving grace of Jesus' death was the conviction that the value of the Law terminated. When Paul said, "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:4), he connected Jesus' death to the cessation of Judaism. For Paul's revised interpretation of Torah and his explication of Jesus' death was a contradiction and denial of Judaism's foundations as well as the teachings of Moses and the Prophets. The redemption which Christ brought meant the end of venerating and observing Torah.**

**Paul also made certain claims which most of his Gentile respondents were unable to check for truth and accuracy. In Rom. 3:21 he declared:**

***"But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify."***

**Answer for yourself: Can you name me one Prophet or Old Testament writer which taught what Paul just said? There are none!**

***Paul offered no Biblical citation as back-up for his assertion. He would have been hard put to find one since his claim is contradicted by the spirit and the letter of virtually every passage in the Torah and Prophets.***

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# FAITH AND WORKS...DOES PAUL MISREPRESENT IT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

**With this article, having laid a proper foundation and alerted the read what to look for as we examine specific texts, let us begin our quest for truth in earnest. We will at this time begin to examine point by point doctrines as taught in the Jewish Old Testament and then compare them with teachings on the same topic from the New Testament, especially from the writings attributed to Paul. Let us look for similarity, assurance of truth by the witness of Scripture confirming previous Scripture, or replacement doctrines in the New Testament by blatant contradiction of the Old Testament by the writings attributed to Paul in the New Testament.**

**Answer for yourself: As we proceed I would ask you to keep this simple question in mind: Can the writings of Paul be true if they contradict Moses, the Prophets, or Jesus?**

## FAITH VERSUS TORAH...WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

**One of Paul's fundamental doctrines is the importance of faith The term he used in Greek is *pistis,* which means trust or belief and refers to the indispensable need to trust in God's word. Paul alluded to his precept repeatedly throughout his writings. Like a man with an obsession he saw examples of his belief wherever he looked. Virtually every book in the Hebrew Bible supplied Paul with passages which, which, according to Paul, could be cited as illustrations that faith (or trust) had replaced and was better than deeds (obedience) as the fruit of faith. Many of the topics in these forthcoming articles, therefore, deal with those Biblical verses cited by Paul as proof of his dogma. After reading them, and comparing Paul's ideas with the original verses taken in context, I only ask that "you" be the judge to what I will show you.**

## HAS FAITH SUPERSEDED THE TORAH AS PAUL TAUGHT?

**In his Epistle to the Romans, which is the most elaborate development and presentation of his doctrine, Paul endeavored to establish the significance of "faith" in the new religion he was preaching. He offered numerous passages from Hebrew Scriptures as proof of his thesis that faith or trust was more important than deeds and that belief in Jesus as messiah (or Christ Jesus, as he expressed it) had superseded the Torah.**

**Answer for yourself: Does God desire that you believe that "faith has superseded the Torah" as Paul maintained?**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul correct; has belief "in" Jesus as Messiah replaced the Torah and obedience to commandments of God for eternal life and salvation? Or is he wrong?**

**Answer for yourself: And if Paul can be proven wrong, what does that say about the average believer today who "believes in Jesus" but has led a life as a Gentile Christian not concerned about the numerous commandments, therefore living without the knowledge of required obedience to the Torah as it relates to his**

**Covenant...the Covenant of Noah.**

**Answer for yourself: Does it not stand to reason that such a one is ignorant of many such laws and commandments, breaks many, or neglects many, because of the improper teaching he has inherited? Remember that there are 613 of them and 66 apply to the non-Jew in his Covenant with God.**

## PAUL MISUNDERSTANDS HABAKKUH…HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE IF HE STUDIED UNDER GAMILEAL?

**According to Paul and his gospel, faith (or trust) had replaced and was better than deeds (obedience). Paul began his reasoning by quoting in ROM 1:17 a beautiful sentence from Habakkuk, popularly translated as, "The righteous shall live by faith."**

***Rom 1:17 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. (KJV)***

**He uniquely and predictably invested this statement with the meaning that people must have faith not in God and obedience to the commandments of God, but in "his gospel"…Paul's unique gospel…. which will then bring them salvation. This is a total perversion of the context of which Habakkuh spoke. Faith in God as the only Savior was replaced by Paul by "faith in Jesus". This is not the same to say the least and definitely not in the heart of Habakkuh when he penned this verse.**

**Answer for yourself: How much influence has Paul's doctrine of "faith in Jesus," "faith in Jesus being the Messiah of Israel," and "faith in the death, burial, and resurrection" of Jesus done harm to the believer in God in contributing to his misunderstanding of a believer's responsibility to have faith in God only and to obey God's commandments thereby making his life more pleasing to God? It is incalculateable.**

**Let me give you one example. I dare say that few have broken the commandment: "Thou shall not kill (premeditate murder). However, the vast majority in Christian churches today are guilty of violating the commandment unaware, for the commandment equates failure to feed and clothe the poor with "murder." This is something few of you have heard in your churches because we focus on "faith in Christ" instead of learning to study the commandments and their nuances and thereby make sure you "live like Christ".**

***What we lack in Christianity today is the basic knowledge that "faith" responded in "obedient actions," and the absence of such action is not faith.***

**Answer for yourself: If such "obedient actions" are lacking in our lives, regardless if we believe "in Jesus," can we be pleasing to God? We can have faith "in Christ" all we want, but if we live lived totally ignorant or and disobedient to the Laws of God we sin. Ignorance of the Law is perpetuated by the Pauline doctrine…."all we have to do is believe in Christ." This is a cosmic error the proportions of which cannot be fathomed.**

***Let us remember that Paul, in developing his doctrine of "faith" is quoting the Prophet Habakkuk in Romans 1:17 and that his reference to "faith" in Romans MUST carry the same idea as expressed by the Prophet Habakkuh.***

## THE PURPOSEFUL MANIPULATION OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES TO MAKE A NEW GOSPEL

There are laws to language and the use of language. When quoting another source, in order to arrive at the original meaning and be true to the text it is necessary to retain the same context as the original writer. If we use the original writer and his language in another way entirely different from what he intended, understand that this is not a “quote” but a completely new idea by the second writer. Paul gave a lot of “new” ideas in the New Testament by purposefully manipulating the Jewish Scriptures to make them say something other than what the original writer intended. But without an in-depth understanding of the Jewish Scriptures which often read completely different from the Gentile Christian's Old Testament one has no idea that they have been changed. Paul was clever in his manipulation of these Jewish texts and covered himself well by using enough Old Testament verbiage to make it sound like he had the authority of the Old Testament Prophets and Moses in writing what he did. It take only a little understanding and time to compare what Paul wrote as "references to" and "quotes of the Jewish Scriptures" with the Jewish Bible to see that what Paul is saying is a purposeful misrepresentation of what the original author actually said. Remember such comparisons much be done against the Jewish Scriptures and not the Old Testament in the Christian's Bibles of today because of the fraudulent translation of them done in 200 B.C.E. To get to the truth of the matter you need a Jewish Old Testament translated into English such as the Stone Edition Tanakh. If you were to do so then you would see for yourself that much of what Paul says could not be further from the truth.

**Answer for yourself: What was the thrust of the message of Habakkuk when he said "the just shall live by faith" and did Paul represent it accurately or inaccurately in the New Testament?**

# THE MESSAGE OF HABAKKUK

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 1:17, when quoting Habakkuk, carry the same meaning that Habakkuk intended his readers to have? Remember if not, then Paul is leading us astray by quoting a Prophet yet distorting his message. Let us investigate and you make up your own mind.**

**The name Habakkuk may come from a Hebrew name that means "to embrace." In his book, he comes to grips with serious problems and lays hold of God by faith when everything in his life seems to be falling apart. His love for and obedience to God is not dictated by his surroundings or his environment. Regardless of the situation one may find himself in, much of which is temporary, the important thing that Habakkuk stresses is that one maintain their faith in God regardless of your situation…good or bad.**

**More precise and to the point, Habakkuk saw the impending Babylonian Invasion, and he wondered why God would use a wicked nation to punish His chosen people. The key text is 2:4, "But the just shall live by his faith” and is quoted in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrew 10:38. The theme of Romans is "the just" and how to be just before God.**

**Habakkuk saw the wickedness of God's people in Judah and prayed for God to work repentance though His people, but the Lord didn't seem to hear. The prophet longed to bring revival to the land, but his prayer went unanswered, or so he though. God told His servant that his prayers would be answered in a way he never expected, for God was going to bring Babylon against Judah and chasten people for their lack of faithfulness and steadfastness to obey His Word. From the human point of view, the invasion of the land and the captivity of the people would seem a tragedy, but it was God's work just the same. Notice if you will the issue is faithfulness to continue to love God and obey the commandments regardless of impending invasion. In other words, don’t give up on God. But be not mistaken, obedience to the commands of God as a consequence of faith is the subject of Habakkuk and not isolated faith in a dogma or doctrine isolated from obedience.**

**Yet God is faithful. Habakkuk was reassured that God's people can trust Him because His character never changes and His Word never fails. It may not seem that way now, but one day His glory will be revealed in all the earth. Meanwhile, God said He was at work so the prophet asked Him to keep on working but to be merciful to His people. Habakkuk reviewed God's work in the past and recalled His greatness and power. In every era of history, God was there to work for His people; He would not fail them now and His people should no longer fail Him as well and would once again become obedient to Him. The Babylonian invasion and captivity would be painful experiences, but God would use it for His glory and the good of His people. Being reassured of God's faithfulness to His people in spite of the consequences and situations they find themselves in, then His people are to be renewed in their faithfulness to Him and to obedience to His word.**

**Having understood the background for the passage "the just shall live by his faith" let us continue to contrast what God intended we know and what we have come to know through the preaching of Paul.**

# NOW CONTRAST THAT IDEA WITH WHAT PAUL SAID

**Answer for yourself: To what kind of "faith" did Habakkuk refer: faith in and recognition to an abstract fact or "belief," or faithfulness to God's Word exampled through their obedience?**

**The Hebrew word, emunato, which is referred to in Habakkuk, is more accurately translated as "his faithfulness" or "his steadfastness." The phrase in Habakkuk 2:4 is better rendered, "The righteous shall live by his faithfulness."**

**Answer for yourself: When quoting a previous Scripture, do we do injustice to the quote from the original meaning if we apply it different way without advising our readers we have done so? We sure do. Dear child of God, this is exactly what Paul did!**

***Understanding the original meaning of the Hebrew word and the prophet Habakkuk's intention from the historical context of the passage, gives Paul's statement in Romans a completely different meaning than what we have been led to believe by others who failed to study thoroughly.***

**The original idea conveyed in Habakkuk and in other passages in the Hebrew Bible where the same term is used is that the person who remains steady and constant in observing his moral principles (Laws) of the Bible will eventually be vindicated, although he suffers in the interim. Since your church most likely does not read from and study the book of Habakkuk, I suggest you read it for yourself and understand the message of the book for yourself, for without such an understanding, you interpretation of what Paul is saying can be faulty and you are likely to believe untruths represented to you as "truths." If Paul is to quote from it then he should carry over the same ideas expressed by the one he quotes and Paul fails to do this!**

**The concept of "justification before God" and the role of "faith" within justification has absolutely no connection to an abstract trust in an idea or belief about a person or another's actions (Jesus'). It has no connection in what you believe about another and their identity (whether Jesus is Messiah or died for your sins according to Paul's vision), but rather for constancy and steadfastness in one's own personal ethical behavior in response to the commandments of God.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you now see that the faith of which Habakkuh was speaking of was not a "faith" directed in something apart from oneself (another, or his identity or accomplishments), but rather a faithfulness**

**in yourself to live obediently to God apart from your circumstances?**

**Answer for yourself: That is rather hard don't you think when you have been told your whole life that "your are under grace and not under these Laws"?**

***Remaining loyal to Torah teachings and commandments is what God intended we demonstrate before Him in spite of our situation, and not a belief in Christ that is devoid of obedience or a belief that gives license and freedom from such commanded obedience to the law.***

***This is just one of Paul's perversions in the New Testament, and I have been warning you for months.***

**The tragic irony of the whole matter is this: It is in such demonstration of obedience to God and his commandments, regardless of our situations and circumstances, which reveal our "faithfulness" and "steadfastness" to Him, which ensures our "justification before God." Nowhere in such an idea is room for a "mental assent to a doctrine" [identity of a man as Messiah or what his death accomplished], but rather it points repeatedly to ethical conduct and behavior based upon God's standards.**

**Let me give you an example quickly. Today's Christians give their tithe to their church which uses the funds as they see fit. But if you have understood what I have been saying, then the commandments of the Torah regarding the Tithe is still in force today. That means if you contribute to such an institution, and the funds are used in other ways than what God has commanded, in reality you are violating the commandment and sinning. You better ask your Pastors to whom you give because I guarantee you that they don't use the funds as the Laws of God command. This makes you an accessory to robbing God and you will never know it until you die! This is only the tip of the iceburg.**

***Habakkuk's message was very different from the one which Paul was preaching.***

**Answer for yourself: Now please be honest with yourself….which idea have you inherited in reading the New Testament and listening to your preachers…..obedience to the commandments of God for justification…… or faith in Paul's vision concerning his understanding of the identity and mission of Jesus for justification?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that Paul has used the passage from Habakkuk in such a way to give authority to what he wants to say which is diametrically opposite to what the original author intended?**

**The original intent of the Habakkuk is obscured in Paul's writings, but Paul's builds momentum for his doctrines by taking out of context and misquoting the Hebrew Scriptures, and you never noticed! The Gentiles to which Paul went were not Old Testament scholars but rather heathens, and would not notice a verse taken out of context from its original source and twisted in such a way to bring a new meaning that destroys the original author's intention. They had never read the Jewish Scriptures to even know if Paul was changing them. The same can be said for 99.9% of Gentile Christians today! Justification comes through repentance and obedience to God and His commandments, regardless of one's situation. But that was not Paul's idea because for Paul, and those who would listen to him, justification came in a mental ascent to a belief in Paul's idea of Yeshua's identity, accomplishments, and his function.**

**You now be the judge.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul honest in his portray of that verse in Romans?**

**Answer for yourself: Are there other instances were Paul distorts the original meaning of the Prophets? You bet….stay tuned.**

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# PAUL WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE THAT GRACE IS EXCLUSIVE OF GOOD WORKS...IS IT?

**Paul took his new religion farther from Judaism as he imparted the concept of "mystery" into his preaching. As stated in the previous article Paul introduced the idea of grace, as the unmerited love and favor of God toward man when it is never unmerited as you have seen, but always "merited" through obedience. According to Paul "grace is granted only to those who have faith alone", but we say in the last article that such Pauline theology is wrong. According to Paul good works and observance of the Law will not bring one grace (Rom. 11:5-6). Either Paul is wrong or the Old Testament is wrong. I would hate to tell God that He made a mistake in the revelation he imparted through Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua who agreed with the Old Testament in his ministry from start to finish. Maybe you have the nerve to tell God that He needed to check with Paul before He spoke at Sinai, but I don't. I stand before you as a previous Christian who has had the knees cut out from under me through in-depth study whereby things I once cherished were exposed to be falsehoods under intense investigation. It is called repentance. If I had to look for a name I guess I am a God-Fearer who follows the God of Israel and the Torah today, because the Paul I once believed in and accepted has been revealed to me by God to be less than a role-model upon 15 years of investigation.**

**Rom 11:5-6**

- **5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.**
- **6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work..(KJV)**

**Paul would have you believe that grace is mutually exclusive of works. In prior articles I have proved him wrong; wrong that is if you believe Moses and the Prophets are right. Both cannot be right. Either Paul came to correct 4000 years of error, or else he was in error himself. What is so sad is that all most of you have ever read is the New Testament which paints Paul in a rather positive light. But dear brothers and sisters, much has been written about Paul by the Jews as well as the early Ebionite believers, not to mention Peter and James, which never made it into your Bibles which reveal Paul as the enemy of the early church because of the doctrines he taught. Remember Paul was hounded literally by Jews who followed him everywhere in hops of correcting him and his theology before he could do any more damage to the Torah. These Jews who beat him were none other than those of the Messianic community which were zealous to undo the errors Paul was preaching in Yeshua's name. I could go on, but I have other articles dealing with this aspect of the Paul problem. Now back to Paul's subversion of the Jewish Bible in the creation of new religion which opposed the religion and faith of Yeshua.**

**Answer for yourself: Having now come to understand that God's grace is "conditional" and not "unconditional", no matter what Paul says, how ready are you to receive Paul's personal opinions upon grace when they are contradicted by the very words of the Bible Yeshua used?**

**Answer for yourself: I am aware that Paul wrote such statements, but does that make them correct when other passages from Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua correct him?**

# PAUL WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE ISRAEL IS BLIND TO HIS "SPECIAL" GOSPEL…BLINDED TO THE TRUTH…..NOTHING COULD BE FARTHER FROM THE TRUTH

**Thus, according to Paul, despite its seeking, Israel could not find grace….Pauline grace apart from the Law. Paul called on Isaiah and Psalms to prove his case, again we find Paul changing their words to his suit his needs and agenda.**

**In Rom. 11:8 Paul or a Pauline writer later ostensibly quoted Isaiah 29:10. There are words and even fewer ideas which coincide between Isaiah's passage and Paul's version of it.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul use a quote from Isaiah 29:10 referring to a people's lack of obedience to live morally and superimpose another meaning upon it entirely in the New Testament?**

**Let us examine and contrast the two passages.**

**ISAIAH 29:10**

***10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: What is the context of the Isaiah quote used by Paul?**

**Isaiah here condemned the people's moral blindness and their disobedience to God and His Torah which resulted in their refusal to pay attention to his warnings.**

**Answer for yourself: When Paul quotes this verse does he change the "context"? Let us examine the text to find out shall we?**

**Here is Paul's citation of the above verse from Rom. 11:8::**

**Rom 11:8**

**8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (KJV)**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul link the "spirit of slumber" to the people's moral failures as did Isaiah, or does he connect it to the rejection by the Jewish people of his unique gospel of "faith alone" in Christ and Paul's gospel for justification?**

***Think dear child of God before you answer. It is one thing to quote Isaiah and borrow Prophetic authority, but it is entirely another thing to quote Isaiah "out of context" as Paul does to justify his unique message which in reality is a contradiction of 4000 years of Biblical revelation since Moses.***

Now listen up dear believer. Paul would have us believe that this "spirit of slumber" has been given by God in order for the Jews not to recognize nor receive his unique gospel of "justification apart from the Law". Not only that but it can be said, and is said so often today, that the Jews don't receive Yeshua because God has blinded them to the simple truths other non-Jews see so easily. Such is not the case. The context from which Paul quotes dealt with failure to see one's moral responsibilities, not the failure of a people to "recognize" a truth but their failure to obey them. This passage is taken out of context and applied to the Jewish failure to recognize Jesus as the Messiah in the wake of the rejection of Paul's gospel and the failure of the Jewish Prophecies to be fulfilled as contained in the Jewish Bible. It has nothing to do with failing to recognize Paul's understanding of the Messiah or failure to see justification apart from the Law because such a concept never existed! Paul again twists and distorts the prophetic message for his own agenda. And we never knew. I bet you have read that Romans 11 passage hundreds of times in your life and justified to yourself why the Jews never accepted your witness of Jesus. I maintain that the Jews know their Bible better than we, and for sure never bothered with a corrupted and slanted document like the New Testament designed by Paul and Rome to undo the Torah. May God forgive both Paul and pro-Pauline Roman writers and authorities that added to and took away from the true Word of God. They took the truth from you by substituting a new document full of mistranslations, misquotations, and misapplication of passages repeatedly taken out of context in order to promote an anti-Torah agenda. The faith of Yeshua was replaced by a faith "in Yeshua" and more than likely you fell for it. I did, and remained in it for most of my life until I had an encounter with God and began a serious study of the Word of God. That was over 15 years ago, and you are the beneficiaries of my research. May God be praised for His truth is not hidden for the eyes of the upright.

Paul would have us believe that his special "mystery of grace" is connected to faith alone in Christ. But the Jews knew quite well what we don't, that grace and justification has always and will always be conditional to man's obedience! This brings to our mind a rather puzzling problem, as we have repeatedly seen how Paul was wrong about the Torah.

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that this very damaging passages concerning the blindness of the Jewish people was not in the first New Testament collected by Marcion in 150 A.D. and was to appear in and around 200 A.D? It is understood by scholars today to have been written by a Paulinist much later and you never knew but this passage has done great harm to the Jewish people due to the Anti-Semitism of the writers of the New Testament and that includes Paul the supposed "Pharisee of Pharisees."**

**Answer for yourself: Ask yourself this question: How could Paul make so many glaring errors in translation of the Torah, misquotation of the Torah, and misapplication of Old Testament passages by taking them out of context if he was really a Pharisee and studied at the feet of Gamileal? That's a good one. I will give you a hint we have extra-biblical evidence that Paul was a Sadducee, who when spurned in his love attempt of the Chief Priest's daughter, changed to become a Pharisee. But more than that, we also have evidence that Paul was a non-Jew who converted to Biblical Judaism. No wonder he was against circumcision as an adult and taught a mixture of Pagan Mystery religions and Gnosticism along with Judaism. Troas, his home base, was the capital of Mithra worship. If you want to know more email me and I will see you get the information you desire. Now let us finish up on this article.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul take great liberty with the quoted text from Isaiah and apply it to meanings other than what God intended we understand? Yes, most assuredly. You should see that for yourself by now.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul added "unto this day" to the Isaiah quote? I highlighted in order to make it stand out. Go back and look at it.**

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul think to add "unto this day" to the Isaiah passage?**

By adding the last line, "unto this day," Paul created the impression that Isaiah was telling the people

that they were "blind and deaf" to this very day, meaning until Paul's day and to his message of grace and justification without the Law. Paul would have us believe that Isaiah preached the same message as himself which is utterly preposterous. But to the unsuspecting that is what they see when reading Paul. Paul would have us believe that he stand in a long line of prophets which are called of God to chastise the people because they reject "justification apart from the law". This is an incredible lie!

**Answer for yourself: If someone came up to you and told you that God said that you could be justified by God by faith alone, apart from the Law, and that you did not have to do anything but believe mentally a set of doctrines, and that you no longer had to submit yourself to regulations and laws in conduct and behavior, can you thing of one reason why you would not accept such a proposal? It sure would be easier would it not? Well the Jews have said "no" to this since the beginning because their Scriptures have been safegarded against corruption unlike the Gentile's which are been altered constantly!**

The reason it was not accepted is the same reason I have been telling you over and over. These people knew God. They were of a people who saw God at Sinai and heard His voice. They knew what God had said and were not confused. They were a people to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises. They had the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Messiah will come. They belong to a people who are over all, may God be blessed for ever. But since we were New Testament believer, not studied and competent in the Jewish Old Testament, it was easy for us to read the New Testament and the Pauline passages and not be aware that we are reading misquotations, mistranslations, and misapplications of passages grossly taken out of context. For after all, it sure sounded spiritual when I read it. But facts are facts, and I have shown you the errors we read for years and accepted as fact. May God forgive our lethargy that prevented our serious study of His Word.

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that Paul added to the Isaiah quote in order to justify his position that God had not given the Jews the grace to understand his replacement message and teachings of "justification apart from the Law, or his message about Yeshua and his identity"?**

**Answer for yourself: Having read this, as well as the previous articles, can you continue to believe that God withheld from the Jewish people grace, thus closing their minds to the concepts Paul preached; faith in the Paul's identity of Yeshua and Paul's idea of Yeshua's mission which was to preach justification apart from the Law? I would hope not.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that Paul added to the Isaiah quote in order to justify his position that God had not given the Jews the grace to understand his message and teachings, but rather withheld from them grace by closing their minds to the concepts and gospel he preached; namely that Paul preached faith in the identity and death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua alone without obedience to the commandments of God as justification before God?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see that Paul is on his very own personal mission and cares not to quote the passages correctly or see that his Gentile readers be given the original meaning message God intended when He anointed the Prophets to write what they did?**

**Answer for yourself: This may be a little premature at this stage, but can you begin to see Paul's new doctrines contradict the Law and the Prophets and lay the foundation for a new religion what is opposite to what Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets both believed and taught?**

**Answer for yourself: To what extent was Paul's rejection by James and the Jerusalem church contribute to his creation of new doctrines intended to solidify his own personal following among Gentiles, themselves who were not conversant with the Old Testament and who would not know the difference if Paul misquoted or misused Old Testament passages? Better think about that again!!!!!**

**Answer for yourself: It is any wonder that Paul could only preach and write such things in Asia Minor and not in Jerusalem where he would be quickly corrected by those who knew the Bible better than he?**

**Back to the point, Isaiah was not speaking of grace. In the above verse he was addressing the citizens of Jerusalem with a dire warning: shape up or ship out. In other words, heed my message from God--to observe the moral requisites of the Torah--or you'll suffer exile.**

**Answer for yourself: If Isaiah had believed, as Paul taught, and as Paul would have us believe Isaiah did since Paul misquoted Isaiah out of context to prove his point, that the people could be justified before God by faith alone, without obedience to the Laws and Commandments of God, many of which regulate moral conduct between man and men, then why Isaiah's warning in the first place, and why Isaiah's message of correction and repentance to the Jewish people? I rest my case. Again Paul is found to be teaching lies in the Prophets' name.**

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# GRACE AS AN ACT OF GOD'S UNMERITED FAVOR...OR IS IT MERITED AFTER ALL...AND AGAIN HAVE WE BEEN MISLED BY PAUL?

**In the previous articles I have exposed Paul's gospel as one of his own creation; a gospel which in reality is not good news to anyone who is trying to pattern their lives after Yeshua, let alone Moses and the Prophets. Let me emphasize again that I take no joy in having to expose Paul in the manner that I must, but you deserve the truth about God and what He has really said to mankind; "has God said"? Yes He has, and if you only read Paul and his epistles, and fail to do comparative studies from the sources from which Paul quotes, I can guarantee you that you have not heard God but rather one who has deviated from the path of God. The Jewish people, and a few Christians, have always understood and knew this. It is part of our calling to get the truth to you in order that "you make your calling and election certain."**

## IS GRACE UNMERITED FAVOR AS PAUL WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE?

**Paul's writing make it seem that God's "election" of an individual or group to a favored status was a capricious decision which "did not depend on man's desire, effort, obedience, or works; but on God's mercy alone" (ROM 9:16).**

**Rom 9:16**

**16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth [Paul's reference to actions or works of man], but of God that sheweth mercy. (KJV)**

**Here again in Romans 9:13 Paul reiterates the same thought; that the grace of God is to be received by faith alone (without works), however clothed in slightly different attire.**

**Rom. 9:13**

**As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.**

**God's love, as well as his grace, according to Paul, is unmerited. Paul make it look as if it is arbitrary. In Romans 9:13 Paul illustrated his thesis this time with lines from Malachi 1:2,3: "Jacob I loved and Esau I hated."**

**Answer for yourself: Could it possibly have been Edom's actions (works) which caused God to hate Esau?**

**Answer for yourself: Far more than an arbitrary decision by God, can you see that God's grace is measured out to those who deserve it (Edom did not because of their harsh treatment of Israel).**

**Now please pay close attention. Malachi wrote these words in memory of Edom's (Esau's descendants) malicious treatment of Judea and its people. Esau was the ancestor of Edom, therefore his name is used symbolically for that nation as Jacob's is for Israel. The Edomites had gloated over Judea's fall to Babylonia, had cut off the escape of Judean fugitives, and had joined in the plunder of the Temple. Their treachery and malice knew no bounds. Their conduct, like ours as well, brings the blessings of God or His punishment. Their conduct influences God's attitude toward them. Their persecution of Israel brought harshness from God toward them.**

**Answer for yourself: Have we forgotten God's promise to Abraham in the Abrahamic Covenant which states (Gen. 12:3): And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee:"?**

## *The above passage definitely refers to "merit" and its role in receiving from God His blessings.*

**This is another way of saying faith is fulfilled with works! In the last article we showed you Paul's stance on the matter from Romans 4:5 "But to him that worketh NOT, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness." We showed you the folly of such in the last article. Again we encounter the same thought expressed just a little different. Paul ignored the historical reason for God's antagonism to Edom (Esau) which the prophet Malachi expressed in God's name in Mal. 1:2-3. It was because of Edom's conduct (works) that God was displeased with them. Let me remind you that Edom believed in the God of Israel, for it was Esau's seed. But "faith alone" apart from "works" was not enough to justify Edom before God. Their violation of the commandments of God brought a strong rebuke from God. It does the same for us regardless of what Paul says.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it misleading for Paul to use a quote from an Old Testament Scripture that is tied to a historical event and use it completely differently to reinforce your own agenda in the New Testament without instructing your readers you are doing so? You figure it out.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that God's blessing is not arbitrary or based upon faith alone as Paul would have you believe, but comes in response to man's actions, in this case the blessing of Israel by others and not the punishment of them?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that Paul's choice of Edom for his example betrays his own doctrine; that he chose a nations which had "faith" but their "works" caused the rebuke of God? It sure seems to me that if Paul were correct, as he wants us to think, then Edom should have been approved of God apart from their works….but they were not!**

**Paul assured us that "But to him that worketh NOT, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness", but the example of Edom given by Paul for his proof, in reality, proves the exact opposite!**

**The prophet Malachi's words did not condone random or arbitrary rejection by God of Esau's descendants; Malachi gave the reason for God's rebuke of Edom, even if Paul didn't.**

# THE DECEPTION OF PAUL DOES NOT END THERE…HE CONTINUES

**Even more devious is the way Paul portrayed God in Rom. 9:15 which is derived from Ex 33:19. I say "devious" for his audience was primarily Gentile in its makeup and unaware of the nuances that are inherent in the Hebrew language from which he wrote and spoke. I want you to notice that in the Greek and English translation below we come to the conclusion from an English reading and interpretation that God does arbitrarily dispense grace to whom He desires.**

**The original verse translates as follows:**

**Exod 33:19**

**19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to *whom* I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on *whom* I will shew mercy. (KJV)**

# LOOK WHAT IS HIDDEN BEHIND THE HEBREW WORD FOR "WHOM"

**“Whom” in Hebrew is the Strong’s Number 834. 834 'asher-**

- **1) (relative pronoun)**
- **a) which, who**
- **b) that which (what)**
- **2) as a conjunction:**
- **a) that (in an objective clause)**
- **b) when**
- **c) since**
- **d) as**
- ***e)* *if (conditional)***

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the Hebrew for "whom" in the context of receiving the grace of God contains a "conditional aspect"?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that the passage from Exodus, from which Paul quotes NEVER contained an idea that God will be gracious arbitrarily to anyone, yet the exact opposite is true, that God’s grace toward man is “conditional” upon man’s beliefs and his resultant obedience and conduct which flow out from his beliefs?**

**Answer for yourself: And who better merited God’s grace (in this instance to have God revealed to him) than Moses to whom the passage is addressed?**

**The intent here in the Exodus passage, as seen within the context of the entire Torah, is that God will have pity on those who deserve it.**

***The whole Pentateuch is unequivocal in its message of reward and punishment based upon human behavior. Such human behavior is or is not the consequence of obedience to the commands of God which are opportunities to exhibit and live out our faith.***

**Exile was the penalty for disobedience to God's laws; prosperity of the nation in its own land was recompense for adhering God's commands. There is nothing arbitrary, capricious, or random about who enjoys "election” or favor and when he is compensated. It depends on man's effort, not God's whim.**

**I am not wanting to kick a dog which he is down, but again, in this instance Paul is incorrect in changing the meaning of the original text when he writes about such a doctrine in the New Testament. This is beyond doubt to those who will look deeply enough to see if for themselves. We gain are led into deception and error by Pauline literature.**

**As a child growing up in church I heard with regular frequency the phrase "grace is unmerited favor" as it was**

**the fruit of Pauline theology. Now that you have see past the deception and misinterpretation of the New Testament and the Pauline writings, let me ask you this question.**

**Answer for yourself: So, is the grace of God “unmerited favor” or “merited favor” as you have now discovered that it always is conditional with God upon man and his actions which are a product one way or the other of his faith or lack of it? Definitely faith "works" either obediently or the lack of faith manifests itself in acts of disobedience to the commands of God.**

**Answer for yourself: What other foundational doctrines have we learned in error because we have listened to Paul more than Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets, and what sins do we commit unknowingly because we are brainwashed by Pauline theology?**

**Answer for yourself: Could you be like Edom, and be hated by God and not know until you die, because you, like Edom, have faith with the "wrong works" or "no works at all" having trusted Paul your whole life and therefore guilty before God of having lived your life under "grace and faith only" paying no regard or little toward obedience to the 613 commandments of God?**

**Answer for yourself: Have I caused you to rethink what you have accepted in church unquestioningly?**

**Answer for yourself: What sins do we commit unknowingly because we are brainwashed by Pauline theology and have failed to understand the message of the real Bible due to reading the New Testament which is full of mistranslations, misquotations, and verses taken out of context to promote "another gospel"? The irony of accepting Pauline theology, which is in reality "another gospel" never ceases to amaze me. Oh God give us the desire and ability to study to find Your truth. Shalom.**

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# THE ANTI-JUDAISM OF PAUL….STRANGE FOR A "SUPPOSED PHARISEE OF THE PHARISEES" ... DON'T YOU THINK?

## PAUL'S MISUSE OF PSALM 69:23-24 IN ROM. 11:9-10...WAS THE PROPHET ORIGINALLY CURSING THE JEWS OR THEIR ENEMIES?

**Let us first familiarize ourself with Paul's passage in Rom. 11:9-10**

**Rom 11:9-10**

- ***9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:***
- ***10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always. (KJV)***

**The author of Psalm 69:23-24, who was quoted by Paul with somewhat different words in Rom. 11:9-10, did not have grace in mind either when he said:**

**Ps 69:23-24**

- ***23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.***
- ***24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. (KJV)***

**The psalmist, who was probably Jeremiah and not David, as Paul said, called down God's curse on his brutal and ruthless enemies of God.**

**Paul quotes the same passage to call down God's curse on his own people…the Jewish people...for not accepting his conflicting gospel of justification apart from the Law!**

**Answer for yourself: How could the Jews do otherwise as Moses was being read weekly in the Synagogues? They Jews knew better than to accept a "false gospel." They knew the message from Paul was contradicting Moses, the Prophets, and the writings. They knew the God who was the same yesterday, today, and forever, and Who changes not. It is we who change and in this case attempted to change the over-all message of God in the Jewish Scriptures.**

**Psalm 69 is a prayer for God's judgment against His enemies for excessive cruelty toward the Children of God. This psalm gives extensive expression to one of the major themes of the psalms: undeserved suffering. In this case the suffering has come largely from the psalmist's steadfastness in his commitment to the LORD and His commandments. Ironic that they suffered for what Paul wants them to give up and he advocated suffering in**

**the form of God's punishment upon them for not giving up the Torah.**

**Now pay attention. It is absolutely ironic that Paul would quote from a Psalm to further his agenda of justification apart from the Law and "supposed" justification by accepting his unique identity of Yeshua in place of obedience to the Torah by using a Psalm which is written in heat of passion of one who says that the zeal of God's House, where the Torah is taught, has eaten himself up. I find that rather amazing. Another ironic thing is that he refers to a Psalm where the writer begs God not to turn His face from His servant (the writer of the Psalm), when all along Paul knew that man's iniquities (sin as understood as violation of the Law of God) separates man from God. Yet Paul wants us to believe in faith alone apart from obedience to the mitzvoth and laws of God. How absurd!**

***Paul calls down God's curse and punishment on the Jews because they won't accept new Pauline doctrines that contradict Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua and his teachings.***

**We have already looked at David and see that he did not believe in justification apart from the Law. We clearly saw that David responded to his faith in "works" of penitence, repentance, prayer, and confession in order to be justified before God. This we should remember in light of Paul quoting the psalms trying to used David for his authority for his doctrines. Such is foolishness.**

**So in summary Paul misquotes the Old Testament again and connects the people's moral failures as equal to their rejecting his teachings ("his gospel") of "faith alone without obedience and works." Likewise, he equates Jeremiah's/ or David's prayer for God's judgment upon their enemies with those who reject and refuse his unique and different teachings which opposed the only Bible they knew. We today would not be so confused had Rome not put a substitute Torah together in the fourth century (the New Testament) to combat the Jews who already had "their book".**

**Answer for yourself: Just what kind of man and what agenda could one have that he would desire that the very ones he is sent to with a message from God "be cursed" because they reject his unique message of salvation which opposed all they every knew and read since the beginning of time?**

**Answer for yourself: What kind of "sour-grapes" theology is this we have followed uncritically in our churches?**

**I would recommend that all read a book by Hiram Maccoby, The Mythmaker: Paul and the Invention of Christianity. They you will know the answer to the last question. Shalom.**

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# PAUL MISQUOTES THE PROPHETS & MISIDENTIFIES THE STUMBLING STONE…YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING?

**In the previous articles in this series I have shown you how Paul misrepresented the Prophetic Scriptures for his own personal agenda.** In order to promote a "righteousness apart from the Law" Paul was forced to mistranslate, misquote, and misapply Jewish Scriptures in order to make them say what the original writers never intended.

This particular article is possibly one of the most important pieces of information you may have ever read. The implications of what I will show you is staggering to say the least. You should recognize immediately the magnitude of what I am showing you and you should be enraged at such a thought that such a false and hideous doctrine has been foisted upon you since your youth and for the most part you never realized it. Such teachings as espoused by Paul not only separated him for the Jewish people, but Jewish leaders as well, both Messianic and non-Messianic Jews of the first century. But the non-Jews, having never had the Torah and the Commandments of God, knew not the magnitude nor the errors of of Paul's teachings. I hope to enlighten you to the implications that go with these Pauline dogmas. If you understand what I am sharing with you then you will never be the same again.

## WHY WOULD PAUL CALL THE BIBLE JESUS USED A STUMBLING STONE?

Paul's agenda of promoting the grace of God to be received by faith alone versus faith that is not divorced from good works in the form of obeyed commandments continues with his claim in Romans 9:30-32 that "the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness obtained it by faith but Israel who pursued a law of righteousness has not attained it...because they pursued it by works."

**Answer for yourself: Is this a correct assessment of the situation at hand?**

**Now please pay close attention. Amazingly Paul calls the Jew's acts of obedience to God's Word which were manifested in faithful works of the Law on which they were based, along with commandments fulfilled by the Jewish people a "stumbling stone" (ROM 9:30-32).**

***Rom 9:30-32 30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because***

***they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul just called the Bible Yeshua used a "stumbling stone?"**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the very documents to which Yeshua referred that of him it is written; the Law and Prophets and Writings, are considered by Paul a "stumbling stone?"**

**Answer for yourself: Do you think that when God moved holy men of old to receive the holy revelation that God considered His actions a "stumbling stone" as Paul would later?**

**Paul and his theological persuasion (Gnosticism mixed with pagan mystery religions) is completely contrary to the teachings of the Jewish Old Testament and the Bible Yeshua used his whole life. Although Yeshua might say not one jot or tittle will every pass away from the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings until all is completed, for Paul it has already passed away. Dear child of God, please understand it is Paul who has a new and different way of justification that finds its origin in his vision on the Damascus road. I find it rather strange that before when God had a revelation for a people He insured it's survival and accuracy by revealing it to millions all at once at Sinai but here we are to believe that He changed everything when giving such instructions to only one man!**

**Answer for yourself: What you will have to struggle with, as I have, is namely this: are we to accept the vision of a man over the written Bible that was given by holy men of old as they were moved by the Spirit of God?**

**Answer for yourself: Are we to accept the revelations from the vision of one man over the Bible and Sinai faith which was witnessed by millions who were all in agreement with what was said?**

**Answer for yourself: We are told that every Word from God is to be witnessed by two or three witnesses. Where are the other witnesses other than Paul which heard God say the same thing as Paul; that there is a justification apart from the Law and that it is now replaced by a belief in Paul's unique understanding of Yeshua and the particulars about his life and death as a form of atonement or justification before God?**

***What you fail to realize most of the times is that we have the whole of the witness of the Old Testament which opposes Paul's "gospel."***

**Answer for yourself: Ask yourself this: Is it possible that David, who penned the 119 Psalm, who wrote such glorious things about God and His Law, secretly though that it was stumbling block as did Paul?**

## WHAT DID PAUL REALLY WRITE...WAS IT ADDED TO LATER BY OTHERS? ARE THE JEWS REALLY BLINDED TO THE TRUTH..OR HAVE THEY HAD IT ALL ALONG?

**I hope you are setting down for this.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you know that Romans 9-11 were not in the original Romans written by Paul and will not show up till around 200 A.D.? That is right. I would like to quote Jerome on this from his Bible Commentary, pp. 318:**

***"Rom 9-11….is a foreign body in the letter, added later by some editor."***

**That means Romans 9-11 is missing from the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament. Not only do we have Jerome's testimony, but the Marcion New Testament, which was the first collected, is**

likewise missing it as well in its collections of Paul's writings. This strongly suggests another than Paul is the possible author of such information. The question of its value to the believer is debatable at least.

**Answer for yourself: What are we to think when it dawns on us that maybe, oh just maybe, the Jews are "blind" at all and that we better listen to them rather than the anti-Semitism of the Gentile church uses Paul for their "ambassador"? Remember that question when the reality that ...Rom 11:25 25... For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in (KJV)...was not in Romans until 200 A.D.? Who is writing this slander?**

**Answer for yourself: Could it be that the Torah is not a "stumbling stone" as it is depicted by those who took Paul's anti-Law bias and elaborated upon it throughout the New Testament?**

When one reads Paul in the New Testament you get the sense of his grief over the Jewish people's rejection of "Paul's" gospel of justification apart from the Law. Not only that but his sadness was over the lack of the Jewish acceptance of Yeshua as their Messiah following his death. This is not as strange as it sounds, for before Yeshua's death it is estimated 7 out of 10 Jews hoped and believed in Yeshua to be the potential Messiah. His death did a lot to cause them to re-evaluate their beliefs in him since the Jewish prophecies in their Jewish Scriptures remained unfulfilled. Yet, Yeshua predicted his return before the generation had ended. There was yet hope that he might return some way and fulfill the prophecies. After 40 years, and the destruction of the Temple, when Yeshua had not come again then the last few believers were again forced to re-evaluate their beliefs in Yeshua as their Messiah. Again this is not surprising to those familiar with the Old Testament Prophets and the prophecies which must be fulfilled by the Messiah. The facts of the failure of the Jewish prophecies to be fulfilled are a harsh reality for the Christian today who serious inquires as to if Yeshua actually fulfilled the Jewish prophecies. He didn't. That is why the Jews could no longer hope in him. This is possibly one of the hardest things for the Christian to deal with once he sees it for himself. But to see this fact one has to know truthfully what these prophecies really are as taken from the Jewish Scriptures as the Christian Old Testaments and New Testament have not only butchered them but created "false prophecies" that Jesus is made to fulfill in order to pass him off as the Messiah of the world for the non-Jewish people. After years of study all but one of these prophecies in the New Testament can be shown to be false prophecies that have creatively been construed by purposeful mistranslation, misquotation, creative fiction, combining two or more passages to create a false prophecy, etc. The list is endless and heartbreaking when the Christian is shown such textual manipulation. No wonder the Jewish people who have the true Jewish Scriptures will not accept the New Testament's story about Jesus. Even after seeing it for myself I still did not want to give up on my Yeshua. I understand other's hesitancy to even listen to such events, but truth is truth. Maybe when the real Messiah comes to fulfill the Jewish Scriptures and raise the dead, then it will be Yeshua. I hope so, but fear not, if by chance it is not him I will accept whoever comes in the Name of the LORD. This sad information can be obtained at: http://returningtofaithofyeshua.freeservers.com

I am fully aware that the New Testament is full of "fulfilled" prophecies of Yeshua, which were designed to convince the non-Jew that Yeshua was the long-awaited Messiah. The Jew, who knew their own Bible, let alone the Rabbis of the day knew better and could see through Paul's blatant misuse of the Jewish Scriptures. But dear reader, and this is what I have been trying to show you for some time now, most, if not all of them (except riding into Jerusalem on an ass..but one Gospel has Jesus riding on two asses at once...what's with that?) are false fulfillments created by mistranslation on purpose, mistranslation on purpose, and purposeful citing of Old Testament passages out of context in order to make them say things completely different from what the original writers intended. The Gentiles, for whom the New Testament was created, were not competent in the Old Testament Scriptures as were the Jews, thus they would not be hesitant to believe what they read. Simply, the

Gentiles were not aware that that what Paul was preaching and writing were often falsifications of the real Jewish Scriptures. I was not either many years ago, but after studying and comparing the New Testament and the Christian Old Testament with the actual Hebrew Bible, the errors are alarming. This is why I write to you to warn you of the deception. Now let us return to Paul.

**Paul was preaching Yeshua as the Messiah. The people looked to their own Bible for the proof that Yeshua was he. There the prophecies laid unfulfilled yet in their day. This can mean only one thing: The Messiah has not been revealed; for some it meant he had not yet come. Others felt he had come but for some reason the prophecies had not been fulfilled. Paul felt differently. Paul would market Yeshua as the Messiah to the Gentiles but could not to the Jews for they knew better since they and their Rabbis knew their Bibles better than to accept a false "gospel." They knew what we don't or seem to forget; namely, that God is the same yesterday and forever. He changes not.** Even the prophecies for the future teach that Judaism will be the end-world religion of the world to come. Justification apart from the Law has never been part of the revelation from God and never will not matter what Paul thinks he heard on some hot dusty road one day on the way to Damascus. So for Paul he extends "righteousness apart from the Torah (Law) to the non-Jew" [remember in the Covenant of Noah that there are 66 Commandments as Covenant stipulations required of God for the non-Jew to be in right standing with Him]. Being not aware of this Covenant of Noah and its required Laws Paul literally deceived these people and preached a false gospel and they warns others not to receive any other "gospel" but his! Not know of the Laws of Noah which were commanded in Acts 15 to be taken to the world where Paul was given letters in Acts 16 ordering him to teach this on his journeys, he does the opposite and teaches a that such "Laws" and "Covenant stipulations" are "stumbling stones." The non-Jews will accept his message, but the Jews who knew better rejected his message. This Jewish rejection of these Pauline untruth would cause Paul to later write that the Jews are a people who "have not having attained righteousness."

**Answer for yourself: And what was their crime? The Jewish people did the only thing that God ever commanded of them…..believe in Yahweh and fulfill His commandments.**

**Paul was wrong. It is that simple. Greater minds than mine have tried to fathom the depths of such a man through history as to why he opposed what was cherished by the Jewish people. I don't pretend to know "why" he did what he did, but history elaborates on it to some degree. But the facts remain.** Paul's gospel opposes the gospel of Yeshua, Moses, and the prophets. Paul's gospel opposes the Torah. Someone is wrong. I will take Yeshua over Paul any day.

# I TOLD YOU PAUL TWISTED THE SCRIPTURES…NOW WATCH

***In order to try and prove his point, for documentation Paul combined two lines from Isaiah taken from verses twenty chapters apart and again quoted them out of context [Isa. 8:14 & Isa. 28:16].***

***These same misquoted verses were repeated in the Epistle, 1 Peter 2:6-8.***

**Let us first examine correctly the verses from Isa. 8:14 and Isa. 28:16:**

# LOOKING AT ISAIAH 8:14

Paul quotes Isaiah 8:14 as being fulfilled in the Jews' rejection of Yeshua and Paul's message of justification apart from the Law, **which he wants us to believe was his unique "gospel message" concerning Yeshua. It wasn't.**

**Rom. 9:33**

***As it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.***

**Now let us begin to study the original context of Isaiah 8:14 from the Jewish Scriptures:**

**Isa 8:14**

## *14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (KJV)*

**Answer for yourself: What was the "stone" to which Isaiah referred? Well one thing is for certain and that it was not Yeshua. Let us see for ourselves.**

**The events of which Isaiah spoke occurred in 735-733 B.C.E. and concerned themselves with the Syro-Ephraimitic war. A coalition between Aram and Ephraim (Northern Israel) planned war with Judah and King Ahaz. King Ahaz was given a sign that God would be "Immanuel" (God with Judah) and would be the salvation and defender of Judah against any enemy. The coalition planned to depose Ahaz and replace him by a prince Bet Tab'el, an Aramean land in northern Transjordan. In verse 9 it refers to 6 or 5 years. Within 5-6 years there would be victory for Judah against her enemies. Ahaz rejects the offer of a "sign" which, in the Old Testament, is usually some event assuring man of a divine intervention. In this case, the sign is meant to be a confirmation of Yahweh's first message to Ahaz. An immense literature has grown up around this oracle and the debate continues. Isaiah does not use the technical word for "virgin" (betula), but a word (alma) that signifies a young woman of marriageable age, whether a virgin or not. Before this child, a child born to a marriageable woman who does not have to be a virgin, would learn right from wrong, or in space of 5-6 years, the military threat toward King Ahaz and Judah would be no more. God's presence with Judah, promised as Immanuel, assured the victory. Had it not for God's presence that assured victory over Assyria and their coalition with Northern Israel, then the Davidic dynasty would have been overthrown. Such a catastrophe would have mean the cancellation of the great dynastic promise made to David's house (2 Samuel 7:12-16). It was on this royal successor to David that Judah pinned her hopes for the welfare of God's people. This child about to be born, therefore, may be the young Hezekiah in whose birth Judah would see the continuing presence of God among His people (Immanuel) and another renewal of the promise made to David.**

**Isaiah prophesied both deliverance and disaster for Judah. First of all, before the child reached the age of discretion, there would be deliverance from the threatening Israel-Aram coalition (v. 16); then there would be devastation wrought by the invading Assyrians (v. 17-25). Those that Ahaz made a treaty with would turn upon him and invade Judah. In verse 13 Yahweh invites that Judah make an alliance with Him as opposed to the alliance it had made with the soon to be invading army of Assyria. The irony in the passage, that Paul failed to depict correctly in his quotation in the New Testament, is that the "same" foundation of Judah, Immanuel Himself, that causes stumbling is also the cornerstone that support the new house of people of God. Yahweh and his promises (His Word...His Torah) to Ahaz was a stumbling stone which he tripped over and cause his whole nation to suffer. Yet, this "same" stone was for Judah their salvation, for although Assyria would invade Judah, it would not be victorious and Judah would not go into captivity to Assyria as had the Northern Kingdom. So as you can now see from the context, God, not the Torah, was the "stumbling stone". Paul misrepresents again the Prophet and his message in the New Testament by changing totally the context. The prophet called the "cornerstone" faithfulness to God's word. Paul makes this "cornerstone" by quoting the prophet supposedly to mean his unique understanding of this Jesus he met on the Damascus road. Instead of presenting the "cornerstone" as faithfulness to God's Word he alters completely the meaning whereby the rejection of the cornerstone is not the rejecting of God's Word but the rejection of his own unique understanding of Yeshua and the Pauline theology surrounding him.**

***Again the irony of the whole matter is that in accepting Paul's gospel about Jesus entails the very same sin of Ahaz; the rejection of God's Word (Torah/Law) which was and is yet today the "Cornerstone."***

# WAS IT REALLY WRITTEN?

**Paul says in Romans 33 that "it is written" and he immediately begins to quote Isaiah, again using Prophetic authority for what he says, and tells his readers that Isaiah was referring to Yeshua being rejected by the Jews. Such rejection of Paul's "Jesus theology" for Paul is the fulfillment of Isaiah's stumbling stone of 8:14. We are to believe that since the Jews rejected Paul's Yeshua and his new message of justification apart from the Law then Yeshua is a stumbling stone for those who reject Paul.**

**Answer for yourself: Now I ask you before God, is that what Isaiah is teaching?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul to be trusted for anything now that you have seen how he misleads his readers and completely changes the text let alone the context? Where is the fear of God to not change or take away from the Word of God?**

**Answer for yourself: How honest is it to say "it is written," giving Prophetic authority to a doctrine, which in reality has nothing to do with what the Prophet intended we understand from his passage?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul lying by saying "it is written" when after all it is not? Yep!**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul again take a passage completely out of context and destroy its meaning and mislead the readers of his letters? Remember, the Gentiles would never have known the true Jewish texts and are we any different today in our Christian churches? Can we spot a Pauline lie?**

**Answer for yourself:Isn't it a little overwhelming by now, if you have been reading our articles, to see all the errors in the use of scripture by Paul?**

**In summary, the eighth chapter of Isaiah God told the prophet to hold firmly to his principles and not fear the ominous political situation looming before Judah. (There was a military threat against Judah formed by a coalition of Syria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel which failed). God told Isaiah that He alone should be feared and no outside force. In 8:14 God's message continued assuring the prophet that "He will be a sanctuary" to those who believe and a "stone of stumbling and rock offense" to those *who do not believe and obey His message through the prophet.* God and His Word is the cornerstone of this "sanctuary" which will protect the people of God from the Assyrian invader.**

# BUT WE ARE NOT THROUGH YET…..LETS LOOK AT ISAIAH 28:16

**Isa 28:16 as taken from the Jewish Scriptures:**

***16 Therefore, thus said my Lord HaShem/Elohim: Behold, I am laying a stone for a foundation in Zion: a sturdy stone, a precious cornerstone, a secure foundation. Let the believer not expect it soon (meaning it will take time for the idolatry to be removed from His people).***

**Now let us examine Paul's misquoted verses from Isa 28:16 found in Romans 9:33. But before we do it need to be stress what the context of Romans 9 is dealing with. Immediately preceding this verse Paul mentions how the Jews sought righteousness not by faith "only," but by the works of the Law. He mentions that they stumbled at the "stumbling stone" which he has already defined as his "gospel message concerning Jesus."**

**Rom.9:33**

***As it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whosoever believeth on <u>him</u> shall not be ashamed.***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul quote the Old Testament correctly, especially in light that he tells us "it is written"? No. Where did the pronoun "him" come from in Paul's quotation of the verse?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul trying to get his audience to believe on "him;" namely Jesus as Paul presented him? You bet he is!**

**Answer for yourself: Where does Paul get this "rock of offense?" You can see from the Hebrew text above that the prophet makes no such mention? Is Paul again quoting this incorrectly but does so for prophetic authority for his doctrines? You bet he is.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul making it sound as if you don't believe in this "Pauline Jesus" then you have somehow displeased God or possibly even offended Him?**

**Now let us examine Isaiah 28:16...from the Christian KJV Bible**

***Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste.***

**Answer for yourself: Do you see for yourself that Paul misquotes Isa. 28:16 in Romans? Where is the "rock of offense?" It simply is not there.**

**Paul, in effort to promote his own theology, adds "him" in Romans 9:33 to make sure you reference the passage to Yeshua. Paul wants to make sure we believe Isaiah was speaking about the rejection of Yeshua as Paul was teaching about him. You hopefully can see through that on you own, having already looked at Isaiah 8:14.**

**Paul's seeming quotation from Isa 28:16, is simply not found in Isa.28. Paul evidently liked the phrase, 'who believes in him shall not be put to shame," because it fit in well with his ideas [belief in Yeshua's identity and not faith in God and His Word with resultant obedience to it}. Paul used the sentence again in the next chapter Romans (10:11).**

**Let us examine the context of Isaiah 28 before we proceed.**

**Isaiah is concerned with a covenant of death. The background of the oracle is the negotiations for an alliance with Egypt against Assyria when Sennacherib was threatening all Palestine. In pursuing this course, the rulers of Judah were inviting invasion and destruction. The structure of power politics offered a false security; in contrast to it Yahweh would build his own structure (vv 16-17) whose cornerstone would be faith and its measuring rods judgment and justice. Instead of covenanting with death and Egypt, Judah is beckoned to covenant with the living God. God says he is laying a cornerstone in Zion and is later called a "tested" stone. This "stone" that has been "tested" over and over again by Israel is nothing more than the salvation guaranteed to the Davidic dynasty. A cornerstone was usually inscribed; this one probably read: "He who puts his faith in it shall not be shaken." Trust in God is the idea underlying the image of the cornerstone and not the acceptance of Paul's Yeshua or his message of justification apart from the Law. In fact the exact opposite it true. The cornerstone provides the salvation by being a sanctuary of protection and salvation to the people of God by faith in God with the result of justice and righteousness which only comes from obedience to the commandments of such a saving God. Paul would have you believe otherwise. Assyria would seem to be the punisher of the children of God, but the opposite is true, it would be God as the cornerstone of His protective sanctuary which would be responsible for the slaying of the whole of**

**Sennacherib's army. Judah will be saved by the cornerstone of Israel….God Himself.** There is absolutely not one hint of anything here referring to Yeshua as the subject of the Prophet Isaiah as Paul would have us believe from his writings in Romans. Paul again misleads Gentile readers who are unfamiliar with the Jewish Scriptures. Nothing has changed today for the Christian Churches are by and large totally ignorant of the Word of God contained in the "Old" Testament, while sadly quite conversant with Pauline literature which I have shown you to riddled and filled with mistranslation, misquotations, and misapplications. But even worse, such mistranslations, misquotations, and misapplications are done "on purpose" as to lead his readers astray from the truth whereby they accept a false doctrine and gospel.

In summary, Paul uses Isaiah and his references to Isaiah's passages 8:14 and 28:16 in a Christological manner of interpretation when referring to a “stone of stumbling.” This is a metaphor or a simile but a far cry from a literal interpretation. It is one thing to compare the Jewish rejection of Yeshua to a "stone of stumbling" in a metaphorical sense, but entirely erroneous and deceptive to say "it is written" because Isaiah did not write about it or intended such a meaning as Paul would have you believe in the least. What is really tragic is that by representing “the stone of stumbling” as the Torah and the Word of God, Paul completely destroys the religion and faith of Yeshua who he wants us to believe as he believed. Such ideas as Paul taught could not be further from the truth. The truth is that Paul lies and few knows he does unless they invest a lot of study to find the truth.

**Answer for yourself: But what would be the occasion that would make the non-Jew look to see if Paul had taught the truth in the first place?**

**Millions read the New Testament never questioning anything. I thank the God above Whom I dearly love Who answered my prayers to make me hungry for the Word of God which were answered in receiving the mantle of a teacher. I studied more than my peers and thus know of what they neglect to look into.**

## *Thus, according to Paul, but not to Isaiah, Yeshua has become a stumbling stone to Jews who do not believe the Pauline theology and doctrine.*

**In closing I wish to summarize what we have learned in this article concerning what the prophet's message really was in the chapter under discussion (Isa. 28). Isaiah was dealing here with another aspect of the political crisis in Judah. He opposed an alliance with Egypt as an unreliable and undependable ally. After denouncing the dishonesty and deceit of the pro-Egyptian party, Isaiah described an ideal state of affairs in verse 16. God said that He laid a foundation stone in Zion and "he that believes shall a firm foundation" for his life.**

**The meaning of this line, from a Hebraic understanding, is that the believer should remain steadfastly to the Word of God even if the realization of his hopes are long in coming (notice that this is the same message given by Habakkuk in the previous article).**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul is consistent and perverts the meaning of both Habakkuk and Isaiah which by no accident preached the same thing?**

**Answer for yourself: What are we to think when we see that both Habakkuk and Isaiah agree on the idea of Biblical Faith in God and His Word for salvation and deliverance and Paul’s ideas which conflict with them?**

**So, we have come far from Paul's misconstruction of Isaiah’s reference to a stumbling stone. In the first case the stumbling block was for those who did not accept Isaiah's communication in God's name.** At some point Paul transformed this into his "gospel" concerning his unique understanding of Yeshua as both a descending Gnostic savior who modeled the pattern of dying and rising godmen from mystery religions. Salvation came though "gnosis" or secret knowledge to which only Paul had and without this "Pauline Gospel" one could not be "saved." This is Gnosticism at it's zenith. One you add many

of the doctrines of mystery religions to Jesus as Paul did and put this in the backdrop of historical Judaism then you have the whole ball of wax.

**In the second reference the stone is not an obstacle but a sign of God's presence among the people and an assurance that eventually justice will prevail.** Paul loses the original meaning totally in his quoting of the passage in his Roman epistle.

**Answer for yourself: Had you?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you think Paul knew he could misquote the Torah to Gentiles who never knew it anyway and get away with it? You bet he did. He fooled you and me didn't he? Well, let us hope we are fooled no longer but that only will happen if we study to return to the faith once given to the Saints.**

Isaiah's messages are always based on obedience to God and to His Law as the way to salvation and deliverance. Far from a repudiation of the Torah as an obstacle to achieving righteousness, the prophet emphasized the necessity of clinging to the Law and the commandments. Paul says the direct opposite!

**Answer for yourself: Can Paul contradict Isaiah and get away with it? Well he has; at least to those who don't know any better. To coin a Pauline phrase....**

## *1 Cor 10:1 1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant...(KJV).*

Paul's judgment of that Law is baffling. He admitted that the Law is holy and good and was observed by Jews. From this favorable evaluation he arrived, via misquotation and misunderstanding of Isaiah, at the startling conclusion that the Torah was a stumbling block to those observing the Law. Here again is Paul's muddled reasoning and circular logic confusing the clear messages of the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible). Paul had an agenda. It is tied to what you already have learned of him earlier in this website: his constant rejection by the Sadducee High Priest, the Pharisees, and the Jerusalem Church. Paul's ego could not take such defeats. He needed and desire a name for himself and found it in compromising the faith of Jesus for acceptance by the non-Jews. He simply presented Jesus to them in the pagan example of their dying/rising godman and he was an overnight sensation. That is to all but the Jerusalem Church which knew better. Paul's methodology has worked beyond his wildest imagination if we look at the fruit of his doctrine in Christianity today. His arguments were imbued with the determination to bend the meaning of every Hebrew Scripture he cited in order to propagate his success and acceptance with the non-Jew. His his ulterior motives were to create a new religion whereby he was "the apostle" of the new faith. In this way, he could get revenge and lack of recognition by the Jerusalem Church which rejected him because of his false message which they knew was totally opposed by Moses, the Prophets, Yeshua, as well as themselves. If you are still with us I salute you for your courage to dig into a difficult subject. May the love for God motivate your study forever. Shalom.

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# DOES GOD WANT YOU TO OBEY HIS TORAH OR PAUL FOR SALVATION?

**We have just seen that for Paul obedience to the commandments of God is a "stumbling stone." We totally destroyed such a foolish statement in the last article. Now we tackle another of Paul's problems in the New Testament.**

**Let us examine Deut. 30:12-14 before we go further.**

**Deut. 30:12-14**

- **12 It is not in heaven; that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may heart it, and do it?**
- **13. Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?**
- **14. But the word is very night unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.**

**According to Deut 30:12-14 the Israelites were told that the commandments [Paul's stumbling stone…remember?] are not hidden or too hard to understand and to obey. Paul teaches otherwise and believes them to be a stumbling stone. Again Moses, speaking the revelation of Sinai, disagrees with Paul.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you name for me one commandment that is impossible for man to do?**

**The laws of God are clearly stated and the people need not search the heavens or beyond the seas for guidance in following them. Yet Paul quoted, or should I say misquotes, this clear-cut message in Romans 10:8 not as a call for ethical behavior and obedience to God's Law, but as a call, not to deeds, but to faith in Yeshua as a deity raised from the dead (ROM 10:9).**

***Rom 10:6-8 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; (KJV)***

**A quick glance between the above passage from the Old Testament with Paul's quote again reveals how Paul has manipulated and changed what the Prophet originally intended. Let us examine Paul's misuse of Deut 30:12-14 in his epistle to the Romans.**

**Answer for yourself: Has Paul emphasized "faith" in promoting his "under grace not under the Law doctrine" and failed to mention the "do it" of Deut. 30:14? He sure has! Is faith without obedience (do it) a false faith? We need to ask James who is the head of the Jerusalem church.**

***James 2:20 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is***

*dead? (KJV)*

## WHAT IS THE CONTEXT OF DEUT. 30 FROM WHICH PAUL QUOTES?

### *First of all "the word" which is "nigh thee and in thy mouth" according to Deut. 30 are the commandments of God.*

**This is beyond doubt regardless of what Paul says in the New Testament which can easily be proven by examination of just a few verses. Deut. 30: 2 is an appeal to return to the LORD thy God by "obeying his voice according to all that I have commanded thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul." The context refers to the obedience of the commandments and law of God.**

**Verse 8 continues the same thought: "And thou shalt return (repent) and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all His commandments which I have commanded thee this day." Again we see the same in verse 10: "If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep His commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul."**

**Now pay close attention to verse 11: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off."**

- **Verse 12: "It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it do it?**
- **Verse 14: "But the word is very night thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.**
- **Verse 15: See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil:**
- **Verse 16: In that I command thee this day to love the LORD, thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply…"**

**The repeated references in Deut. 30 is to the commandments of God to which He repeatedly through Moses implores the people to do them, walk in them, and obey them. No where in the context of the verses can be found Paul's idea of justification apart from the Law or a doctrine of justification because one believes a set of doctrines about Yeshua and his identity as Messiah or not.**

***Paul again completely distorts the original meaning of Moses, as well as Jehovah, by telling his Gentile readers that the verses refer to a justification and righteousness which is of faith "alone" in Romans 10:6. This is a complete contradiction of the Bible Yeshua used and what Moses taught as given by God at Sinai.***

**Paul tells us in verse 8 of Romans chapter 10 that the "word" which is night thee and in one's mouth is the word of faith…implied faith in the message of Paul and his unique understanding of Jesus and not the message of Moses, the Prophets, or Yeshua. Paul does say one thing correct in verse 8; the word of "faith alone" is definitely what he preaches as opposed to the message of the Jerusalem church and Yeshua. As if that is not enough such an idea is nowhere found in the text from which he quotes!**

**Paul goes on to tell us what exactly the "word" of faith he preaches really entails in verses 9-10 of Romans 10.**

- Verse 9: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
- Verse 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
- Verse 11: For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

# THERE IS A MULTITUDE OF PROBLEMS WITH THESE VERSES

**Answer for yourself: Did you know that Romans 9-11 was not in the original Romans written by Paul..that is only shows up in around 200 A.D.? That is right. I would like to quote Jerome on this from his Bible Commentary, pp. 318:**

***"Rom 9-11….is a foreign body in the letter, added later by some editor."***

That means Romans 9-11 is missing from the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament. Not only do we have Jerome's testimony, but the Marcion New Testament, which was the first collected, is likewise missing it as well in its collections of Paul's writings. This strongly suggests another than Paul is the possible author of such information. The question of its value to the believer is debatable at least.

# WAS THE PROPHET SPEAKING ABOUT PAULINE THEOLOGY WHEN SPEAKING OF THE WORD THAT IS NIGH THEE?

Next, by quoting Deut. 30 Paul would have us believe that his new theology is tied somehow to the "word" which is night thee and in thy mouth of Deut. 30. Paul invests his theology with Mosaic and Sinai authority by referencing his message to Moses and Sinai. But there is one major problem… Moses never said what is recorded in Romans 10:9-10. The "word" which brought Israel salvation and which was in their minds and hearts, as well as mouths, was the word of return unto the LORD by the keeping of His laws, commandments, and statutes. Now, if we are not aware of the context of Deut. 30, which many are not who read Romans 10: 9-10, then we would be led to believe that the word spoken of by Moses referred to the acceptance of Yeshua by the believer for salvation. This is what Paul says. But if we are to be true to the Word of God, we must object to such a distortion of truth. Believing in Yeshua and his identity as a Messiah or not believing such "theology" has no bearing on one's salvation according to Moses, the Prophets, Yeshua himself, as well as the Jerusalem church. Again we are deceived and misled by Paul who is preaching a "faith in his theology about Yeshua" as a means of salvation. Such is a gross perversion of Biblical truth. In reality Paul is preaching a new gospel which no one who knew the Bible accepted. The Gentiles, who were not familiar with Deut. or what the "word" of Moses truly was were easily duped by Paul, especially when he made reference to Moses to support his "faith without works" doctrine. The Gentiles would jump at the chance for an easy salvation which required nothing of them other than to accent to a mental belief that a man had been brought back to life. What is so new about that? Their dying pagan gods had been doing that for centuries. Confessing with one's mouth that Yeshua was "master" and "Lord" and subscribing to a belief that God had raised him back to life was sure easier than obeying God's "do's and don'ts". What an easy message to receive by the unsuspecting Gentiles. These non-Jews were assured by Paul, with Mosaic authority no less, that they could "be righteous before God apart from obedience to the commandments of God". Salvation was made so easy by Paul. All they had to do was believe Paul over the Jerusalem church, reject the message of Moses, reject the writings of the Prophets and David, reject the witness of Judaism as a world religion of the time, reject the witness of the church of Jerusalem, and reject the message of Yeshua.

**They only had to believe Paul's misquotations and misapplications of the Jewish Scriptures to be saved. So easy.**

**Answer for yourself: Who would not want to be saved so easily, unless maybe you, a Jew, knew for certain that the message of Paul to be a lie because of the "tested" Cornerstone (Yahweh) Whom had shared His Presence with you since Sinai?**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul had studied under Gamileal didn't he learn anything?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that Paul has completely changed the meaning of the verses from which he quotes and the unsuspecting reader who is not knowledgeable with the Old Testament will easily be misled to accepting "another Gospel" without even knowing it?**

# PAUL IS AGAIN MAKING UP SCRIPTURES THAT DON'T EXIST

**For emphasis, he even added a nonexistent verse:**

***Rom 10:11 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: What Scripture is that?**

**My Hebrew Bible relates the verse of Isa. 28:16 from which Paul quoted from:**

**Isa 28:16 as taken from the Jewish Scriptures:**

***16 Therefore, thus said my Lord HaShem/Elohim: Behold, I am laying a stone for a foundation in Zion: a sturdy stone, a precious cornerstone, a secure foundation. Let the believer not expect it soon (meaning it will take time for the idolatry to be removed from His people).***

**If you notice the pronoun "him," as taken from "believeth on him," is totally lacking from the Hebrew verse. The context of the passage, as seen in the last article, was believe upon God and His Commandments. Paul uses a rather loose quotation, or misquotation, in the context of believing upon Jesus as it follows Rom. 10:1-10 where one is led to confess Jesus as Lord and believe God has raised him from the dead. There as well we are let to believe that confession and belief "in Jesus" as Paul presents him leads to righteousness and confession of said belief brings "salvation."**

*There is only one large problem with this: the text Paul used had a completely different meaning; in fact the Hebrew text completely contradicts Paul's "faith only" and "no Law" Gospel which he presents in Jesus' name!*

**Again let me stress that Paul, in misquoting the verse but yet referring to Isaiah for authority says, that "he who believes in him will not be put to death." This concept on believing on or in a Messiah for salvation is non-existent in Isaiah and Deuteronomy. In ignoring the content and original meaning of the verses he loosely quoted which alluded to prosperity in the land to which they would return upon repentance, Paul extrapolated from them that "(if) you believe in your heart that God raised Yeshua from the dead, you will be saved." This is not the message taken from the passages Paul quotes. Again Paul destroys the message of the original writer for his own purposes.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that we as Christians have failed to recognize when reading**

**Romans 10:9-10 that not only were these passages not in the original Romans until 200 A.D. indicating that Paul had not included them in his original letter to the Roman church or were added later by others, but the belief God desires we have is not in the man-made theologies about Yeshua, but faith in God to both believe and obey the commandment respective of our Covenant?**

**The answer to that question will amaze you considering what you have "heard" taught most of your life. There is an element of irony and cynicism in Paul's choice of a citation from this chapter of Deuteronomy as the basis for his promise of salvation "through faith in Yeshua alone."For that same chapter that Paul quotes from contains the following injunction which Paul fails to mention and which few Christians are aware since they lack knowledge of the Old Testament since Paul's writings have replaced for most the Bible Yeshua used:**

**Deut 30:16-18**

- **16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, *that thou mayest live* and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land wither thou goest to possess it.**
- **17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;**
- **18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, wither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. (KJV)**

**Paul transfers the original meaning from Deut. 30:16 *"that thou mayest live"* [in and on the land of Israel as a reward for obedience to the moral commands of God] to *"thou shalt be saved"* [now connected to belief in the Pauline vision of Jesus and his understanding of a person he never met. How gullible are we to believe such a message that belief in one' man's understanding of the identity of a person for a life after death in heaven somewhere; a message which contradicts the whole of the Torah, Moses, the Prophets, the Writings, and even what Yeshua himself taught.**

**Answer for yourself: Now I ask you, from the passages Paul quotes from, is Paul's new message the message God intends we receive when compared with the Jewish Scriptures which was the Bible Yeshua used?**

# THAT THOU SHALL LIVE ON THE LAND....BE BLESSED IN THIS LIFE....OR THOU SHALL BE SAVED IN HEAVEN?

**Since Paul renders "that thou mayest live" (on and in the land) as "thou shalt be saved" (in heaven) in Romans 10:9, I feel it is of the most importance we look at the words surrounding the quotes he changes. So the following is an exegesis of Deut. 30:16-18:**

**Deut 30:16-18**

- **16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, *that thou mayest live* and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee *in the land* wither thou goest to possess it.**
- **17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;**
- **18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, wither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. (KJV)**

**We are commanded by God to love the LORD they God, to "WALK" in his ways….**

**"Walk" in Hebrew is as follows:**

**3212 yalak- to go, to walk, to come**

- **a) (Qal)**
  - 1) to go, to walk, to come, to depart, to proceed, to move, to go away
  - 2) to die, **to live, manner of life**
- **b) (Hiphil) to lead, to bring, to lead away, to carry, to cause to walk**

**Answer for yourself: Is the topic of the verse and the "word that is in our hearts and mouths" referring to how we as God's people are to live our life in this world whereby the focus is to live a life obeying God's commandments in our course of life? It sure is!**

**Answer for yourself: Is the emphasis upon action, conduct, and behavior, or abstract mental belief concerning a set of doctrines about a man, his identity, and what he did or did not accomplish according to what Paul taught?**

**We are to walk throughout life "in His ways." The Hebrew for "WAYS" is as follows:**

**1870 derek (deh'-rek); from 1869; a road (as trodden); figuratively, a course of life or mode of action, often adverb:**

**a way, a road, a distance, a journey, a manner**

- **a) a road, a way, a path**
- **b) a journey**
- **c) a direction**
- **d) a manner, a habit, a way**
- **e) used of the course of life (figurative)**
- **f) used of moral character (figurative)**

**Answer for yourself: Is the emphasis upon actions that influence our moral character as we live and chart a course through life, or abstract belief and agreement to a set of beliefs and "theology" that Paul ascribes about a man he believes to be the Messiah but whom he never met?**

**Answer for yourself: Is the emphasis upon actions concerning one's moral character throughout the course of one's life or abstract belief in a person or what happened to him in his life that one man interpreted as a replacement for the Torah and the Jewish Bible for salvation?**

**In the same chapter we are commanded by God to "keep" His commandments, statutes, and judgments in order that we may live.**

**The Hebrew word for "keep" is as follows: 8104 shamar-**

**to keep, to guard, to observe, to give heed**

- **a) (Qal)**
  - 1) to keep, to have charge of
  - 2) to keep, to guard, to keep watch and ward, **to protect**, **to save life**; watch, a watchman (participle)
  - 3) to watch for, to wait for
  - 4) to watch, **to observe**
  - 5) **to keep, to retain, to treasure up (in memory)**
  - 6) to keep (within bounds), to restrain
  - 7) **to observe, to celebrate, to keep (sabbath or covenant or commands), to perform (a**

vow)
- 8) to keep, to preserve, to protect
- 9) to keep, to reserve

- **b) (Niphal)**
  - 1) to be on one's guard, to take heed, to take care, to beware
  - 2) to keep oneself, to refrain, to abstain
  - 3) to be kept, to be guarded
- c) (Piel) to keep, to pay heed
- **d) (Hithpael) to keep oneself from**

**Answer for yourself: If you desire to inherit the kind of life only God can give then do you see for yourself that He commands that we "observe, keep, know about and treasure up in our memories" His commandments, statutes, and judgments? Is that rather hard since according to Paul these "Laws" we are no longer under?**

**Answer for yourself: If you desire to inherit the kind of life only God can give then do you see for yourself that He commands that we observe, celebrate, and keep the Sabbath which is part of the Covenant?**

**Answer for yourself: To inherit the kind of life only God can give then do you see for yourself that He commands that we are to keep and protect from destruction His Laws and commandments?**

**Answer for yourself: To inherit the kind of life only God can give then do you see for yourself that He commands that we to both keep the "positive" commandments and "refrain" from breaking the "negative" commandments...respective to our Covenant?**

**This passage is very clear: obey the laws and do not accept another deity. The passage from which Paul quotes does not mention faith, rather the emphasis is upon obedience to the commandments of God as the fruit of one's faith! Of course…there is an implicit assumption that those who obey the commandments believe in the One God who gave them and has such faith...a living faith that obeys.**

**There was no limit to Paul's misuse of the Hebrew Bible to attack Jews who did not accept his new doctrines nor his authority. In ROM 10:15-21 Paul was his most relentless. He literally let loose a barrage of passages pulled from the Hebrew Bible and strung together haphazardly Jewish passages to foster his personal agenda. Dear child of God understand that the Jewish rejection of Paul's good-news gospel (which for them was anything but good news) elicits a chain *of six* quotations in rapid succession ranging from Isaiah to Psalms to Deuteronomy and back to Isaiah. All of them were taken out of context and were supposed to demonstrate Israel's faithlessness and unbelief (we must remember the unbelief is not in God or His Word but in Paul's new doctrines).**

**The Hebrew Bible is replete with self-criticism for Israel's backsliding. There are many sections censuring idolatry and immorality. Paul used incorrectly those passages dealing with immorality and idolatry as if they were denouncing Jews for not believing in Paul's unique message concerning Yeshua. He took those very verses which condemn Israel for its impiety to the demands of Torah and turned them into criticism of the nation for its acts of loyalty to that very body of law and ethics that God commanded they obey.**

***Ironically for the Christian Church to understand the truth concerning Paul, considering what they have heard preached incorrectly for most of their lives, then they have to come to the understanding that from the Jews' standpoint the Jews demonstrated their faithfulness to the laws that God had given them through Moses by rejecting Paul's heathen beliefs.***

**Their “works” as a result of their “faith” was, ironically seen by God, in their rejection of a “new gospel” as taught by Paul which completely destroyed the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.**

**This will be hard for most Christians to handle considering the lack of their Biblical knowledge as well as knowledge of the faith of Yeshua who was not a Christian, but Paul's identification of the historical Yeshua as the incarnate Son of God is essentially un-Jewish and runs counter to the fundamental tenant in the Bible delineating the absolute difference between God and man. Much of our ignorance is because we have accepted uncritically the whole of the New Testament never questioning if these passages we grew to accept and love were in the first New Testament or if they found their way into in over the centuries as the anti-Semitic Gentile Church added to them as they hammered out their replacement religion. Many of the doctrines we are taught to cherish like the virgin-birth were “back-written” much later to accommodate the continually changing doctrinal decisions of the Gentile Catholic Church Councils. I don’t expect you to believe this, but if you had examined the evidence as I had the conclusion is inescapable!**

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# DOES PAUL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO SAY THAT THOSE WHO DON'T ACCEPT HIS "VARIANT" GOSPEL ARE NO LONGER THE "TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD"?

Paul had repeatedly asserted, in opposition to the Jewish Scriptures, that the grace of God to be received by faith was the only way to salvation. Every criterion suggesting that the law was inadequate for salvation was emphasized by Paul. The next step for Paul in his philosophy was to teach that those possessing this “grace” that comes from “faith alone” are the “real Israel”. Those who rejected Paul and his new gospel were no longer the Israel of God.

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that Paul is so exclusive that anyone who does not accept his teachings are now excluded from being the people of God?**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find that amazing given the fact that throughout history God as always granted adoption to mankind based on their monotheistic belief in Him and their obedience to what they had revealed to them by Him (Adam and the Noah Covenant for instance had no knowledge of Messiah or His Name to be saved…yet were they not God’s people)?**

**Let us not forget that almost the whole of Romans chapter 9-11 was missing in the first New Testament collected by Marcion in 150 A.D. Yet a Paulinist writes these chapters and today it is credited to Paul. The author of these chapters said in Rom. 9:7-8:**

***Not because they are his descendants are they Abraham's children...It is children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring.***

**The promise to which Paul alluded was supposedly found in Gen. 18:10, 14:**

***“At the appointed time I will return and Sarah shall have a son.”***

Paul called Isaac a “child of promise" and Abraham's belief in the announcement that he will have a son an act of faith. Paul then jumped, as in a leap of logic, from that alleged faith of Abraham that he would have a son to the faith of Yeshua's followers that he was a promised savior. For Paul this was an analogy although he did not cite any Scriptural passage containing God's promise to send a savior.

The next step in his reasoning was that the true descendants of Abraham are not his genealogical progeny but, instead, ONLY those who believe in Paul’s doctrine and new teachings of faith in

**Yeshua. The conclusion of Paul's argument in Rom. 10 (again this chapter was not in the first New Testament and does not show up until 200 A.D.) was that believers in his new faith doctrine about Yeshua, as well as his new doctrine of justification apart from the Law, are saved as the true Israel and that Jews who reject him and his new revelation, though biological offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are no longer members of the house of Israel!**

**Answer for yourself: In all of the above reasonings by Paul, can you see one glaring omission for all that he says which I have labored to show you in these articles…namely the omission of ANY REFERENCE to obedience as the fruit of one's faith? Paul has completely changed what Moses and the Prophets have taught regarding justification and righteousness!**

# PAUL CONTRADICTS HIMSELF…SO WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that in the next chapter Paul, or the Pauline writer, contradicts what he has just said in Romans 9:7-8 where he said the physical descendants of Abraham are no longer Israel?**

**Let us look at the passage once again.**

***He said in ROM 9:7-8, "Not because they are his descendants are they Abraham's children...It is children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring."***

***Although in the very next chapter, Rom. 11, Paul contradicted himself by saying, that God did not reject the Jews (1-2) and "they are beloved for their father's sake," (28), his real message comes through loud and clear and repeatedly.***

**Answer for yourself: How can Paul go to great lengths, as I have shown you, to teach the rejection of the Jews for rejecting his message of "faith alone" yet he comes a chapter later and says that God has not rejected the Jews?**

**As C.H. Dodd points out, "it is difficult to reconcile Rom.11:28 with Paul's strenuous denial in earlier parts of the epistle that descent from Abraham gives anyone the right to the inheritance of his blessing." Saldarini also calls attention to the contrast in Paul's letter to the Philippians (3:24:1) with Rom. 11. In other words Paul reiterates his theme of the transfer of Israel's heritage to the Gentiles.**

**In Rom. 11 Paul presents an allegory of an olive tree on which wild branches were grafted. The tree was Israel and the wild branches, the Gentiles. The latter (believing Gentiles in God) benefited from the grafting spiritually into Israel because of the unbelief of the Jews [they rejected Yeshua's message of obedience to the 2nd Tablet of the Law which would necessitate reaching out to the Gentile of the world through the Great Commission which only the Messianic part of Judaism obeyed]. Paul goes on to say "And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again." For Paul it was the Jew's non-acceptance of Yeshua that opened up the possibilities for the Gentiles to be saved. Yet the contrary is true and Paul's conclusion is again in error, for it was the Jew's acceptance of Yeshua and his message that would catalyze a movement from within Judaism that would reach well beyond its boarders in taking the message of God, Torah, and Israel to the Gentiles of the world. What you fail to understand is that outside the camp of the Messianic Pharisees to which Yeshua belonged, there was no effort expended to reach the non-Jew with the good news of God's salvation for all mankind. Had it not been for Yeshua and the acceptance of his message by the Jews (faith) and their resultant action (faith manifested in works of evangelism where the Laws of Noah were taken to the non-Jewish world) to take the Jewish Scriptures**

**to the Gentiles of the world , then we might yet be pagans today.**

**Through Paul's reasoning, the announcement to Abraham and Sarah of the "birth of a child" and their belief in this announcement was converted into an act of faith which, in turn, became the foundation for Paul to belief in the coming of a savior. The logical conclusion of Paul's argument is that Abraham's descendants are not his offspring and those who are not his offspring are his descendants! That is absurd.**

**It is on the basis of this flawed reasoning that a theology was created which would deny Jews their spiritual and genealogical heritage and such continues today in the Christian Church because they lack basic Old Testament knowledge because of the over emphasis of the Pauline literature and the deemphasis of the Jewish Scriptures; the Bible Jesus used.**

**Besides the lack of logic and Scriptural evidence, this fantastic conclusion borders on the cynical. Abraham's greatest achievement was his recognition of and adherence to monotheism and not a belief in a coming son. Jews have clung uncompromisingly to a strict belief in one incorporeal God. This is what truly makes them the heirs of the Patriarchs. As hard as it may seem to you since you have not studied in-depth of what I and others speak, Paul's deification of Yeshua as an incarnating God and as a descending Gnostic savior is a contradiction of and a negation of Abraham's beliefs.**

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# IS GOD'S WISDOM AVAILABLE TO ALL...OR ONLY TO THOSE WHO ACCEPT PAUL'S "VARIANT" GOSPEL?

**1 Cor 2:6-8**

- **6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:**
- **7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:**
- **8 Which none of the princes of this world knew for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (KJV)**

**In 1 Cor. 2:6-8 Paul asserted that God's wisdom is secret and hidden from people and only conveyed through a spirit. Understanding, we are led to believe, is limited to believers like Paul and his disciples. "None of the rulers of the age understood it." Paul was the only one given to such understanding and it was his supposed role to teach the whole of the world.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that this is the very core of Gnosticism and that Paul blends Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism in constructing "his gospel" in the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: And to what "hidden wisdom" is Paul referring?**

**If you have the previous articles then I am sure that you already know; namely, justification before God apart from the Law by believing in Paul's Jesus and the theology Paul had crafted around him. Again Paul is telling his non-Jewish readers that the "wisdom" or "message" he is relating to them has come from God. He expected them to understand that although his message of "justification apart from the Law" is a total contradiction from what the religion of Jesus held sacred, his message was really the "hidden message" that God really wanted them to know. Such is the mystery preached by Paul to those who were unfamiliar with the Torah and what Moses, the Prophets, David, and Yeshua really said on the matter. Because such a message of "mystery" was totally foreign to Moses and the Prophets the Jews would have none of it but for the non-Jews that was a totally different story as plenty of "mystery" was involved both in their Gnosticism and Mystery Religions. Paul literally gives them what they already had only "reshaped" a little in his transformation of the Jewish Messiah into another of their dying/rising saviors.**

## PAUL'S MISUSE OF ISAIAH 64:4

**Answer for yourself: Were you aware that Paul is quoting Isaiah in the I Cor. passages?**

**Answer for yourself: By now you have seen repeatedly that Paul misquotes and misapplies the Jewish Scriptures routinely. Now, do you think he has done it again here as well?**

**A gross mistranslation of Isaiah 64:4 became a proof text for Paul's contention. He misquoted the Isaiah passage as follows in I Cor. 2:9:**

***No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived, What God has prepared for those who love him (for Paul this means that the love for God is seen in accepting Paul's Jesus and having faith in Paul's gospel).***

**Now let us examine if that was the original intent of Isaiah as taken from the Jewish Scriptures. The original verse that Paul quotes in Isaiah 64:4 says:**

***For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.***

**Isaiah is calling to the people to return to their God in obedience to His Word for never has the ear heard or eye seen a God beside Yahweh. This God is unfathomable, for man has no idea of the love and blessings God desired to give man. I find it funny that Paul quotes from this passage to prove his point, because Paul stops on verse short.**

**If the reader were to compare Paul's quote in I Cor. 2:6-8 with the original from Isaiah 64:4 and read the very next verse…then this is what you would read.**

**Verse 5 of Isaiah 64:**

***Thou (God) meetest him (the man of faith and works) that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou are wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.***

**Answer for yourself: And how does one "worketh righteousness"? Simply, by obeying the very commandments of God as the demonstration of your faith in Him. As you can see for yourself this is a case "for" justification by keeping the Law and not one against it as Paul would have us believe.**

***But not only that, notice that if one is to "continue" in a life of obeying the commandments of God then Isaiah tell us that "he shall be saved".***

**Answer for yourself: Do you see how Paul had completely misused and twisted the Jewish Scriptures in order to promote his "unique" Gospel; a Gospel that does not have Prophetic authority so he misapplies the texts and the non-Jews knew no better since being not familiar with the Jewish Bible. The same can be said for the Christian Church today who has a "corrupted" Old Testament and not an accurate Jewish text!**

**Answer for yourself: Has your church taught you the salvation message of Isaiah or have they taught you the salvation message of Paul which is a direct contradiction of what God told the Prophets?**

***There you have it. A complete repudiation of Pauline theology by the very Isaiah Paul quotes to try to prove otherwise. Isaiah expressly states that God meets and "joins" Himself with the man who "worketh righteousness" and***

## *who "remember God's ways." Such a man is "saved" by God!*

**Quite different from Paul's claim is Isaiah's message. Implicit in the latter, as in all prophetic teaching, is that wisdom is not a mystery conveyed by an esoteric spirit as Paul would have you believe. Such is Gnosticism and Paul is very Gnostic. His "Gospel" is not the good news of Moses, the Prophets, or of Jesus. That is the tragic irony of the whole matter. Because we as followers of Jesus have corrupted and fraudulent Old Testaments which are only quoted in error again in the New Testament we are in a "Catch 22" where we are guaranteed never to find the truth. Only your persistent study will one day guarantee you will cover the material necessary to alert you to this tragic error to which millions have fallen. The very sad and ironic state is that we never learn we were wrong until we die!**

**Rather, knowledge of how to behave has been given to mankind through God's laws and prophetic messages. Moreover, Israel has seen and heard what God has done for it. There history as a nation is replete with examples of God's voice and benevolence through His Prophets. Isaiah's verse tell us that Israel never saw or heard of the works of *any other being* beside God who has done so much for the nation. Paul literally stood Isaiah's verse on its head. So what else is new?**

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# HOW COULD PAUL BE SO WRONG IN TEACHING THAT THE HANGING OF A CORPSE ON A TREE WAS A CURSE ON THE "DEAD" INSTEAD OF THE "LIVING"?

**It never ceases to amaze me. Paul, a touted "Pharisee of Pharisees," and he butchered the Jewish Scriptures and takes them so much out of context and gets them so backwards that I wonder if he could be Jewish at all. Well I have found my answer to that on both fronts:**

- **First, the Ebionites left records describing Paul as a Gentile convert who later turned against Judaism**
- **Second, when Marcion, a pro-Pauline disciple, collected the first New Testament writings which consisted of ten of Paul's epistles, the Galatians in the first New Testament was missing all of chapter 3 but 4 verses. If these "pro-Pauline" verses had existed then an anti-Semitic Gnostic like Marcion would have jumped at the chance to use them. Their absence from the first New Testament and Paul's earliest Galatians reveals to the objective reader that these passages were added later by some Pauline disciple and today we attribute them to Paul and believe that they were from God no less.**

**We ended the last articles on Paul's misuse of the Hebrew Scripture with something unusual….an example where Paul quoted something correctly! I wish I could continue to build up Paul, but such is not the case. From this momentary lapse into accuracy Paul quickly returned to deception with his exegesis of a sentence in Deuteronomy which he mistranslated in order to try to prove his theory about the *meaning* of Yeshua's death. In Gal. 3:13 Paul claimed…Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'" (Dt. 21:23). As indicated Paul again quotes from Deut. 21:23.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul again take the above quote from Deuteronomy and misapply it to a totally different situation whereby we are led to a conclusion that does not exist in the original context or the original quote? Take a guess?**

**The quote from Paul from Deut. becomes much more understandable when it is correctly rendered and is read within the entire original context along with the verses before and after it. Paul is, as many unlearned and unstudied Christian pastors are today, guilty of taking a Scripture out of its original context and giving it a completely different meaning than what God intended without telling the listeners that what they are saying is an allegory. Too often we take things we hear to be literalisms when they are not to be such.**

**Here is Dt. 21:22-24:**

**If a man *committed a sin worthy of death* and is *put to death* and you *hang him on a tree*, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, *for he that is hanged is a reproach to God;* and *do not defile the land* which the Lord your God gave you for an inheritance.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you believe that Yeshua sinned, and if so, do you know where in the record of his life in the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: Then if Yeshua was without sin, how can his innocent and undeserving death, since he never incurred the wages of sin which was death, ever warrant he be cursed in the first place?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul guilty again of taking a Scripture our of its original context and forcing a new and foreign meaning to it by misquoting it and misleading his Gentile readers who were, for the most part, not familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures?**

**Answer for yourself: Could this be one reason why the Jews, who were well versed in their Bibles and the correct interpretation there of, reject again Paul's new ideas surrounding the death of Yeshua?**

**Answer for yourself: Could miss-application of this passage from Deuteronomy cause Jews to reject Paul's new teachings on atonement which is also seen in his doctrine of "faith alone" without "works" for atonement which the whole of the Bible from Genesis through Malachi teaches?**

**Answer for yourself: Understanding that Paul is teaching against the Torah by substituting a new form of atonement foreign to the Hebrew Bible upon which the "church was to be founded," [Apostles and Prophets and not Paul], can you begin to see how Paul's teachings were in reality ironically "another gospel?"**

**Answer for yourself: Having proved beyond a doubt so far in just these 3 previous articles that Paul miss-used Hebrew Scripture for his personal agenda, can you now see why he had to resort to threats as he does in Galatians where he warns his readers that if they don't accept his "new and different" teaching they will themselves be cursed?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see why he would teach the unsuspecting Gentiles that any other message than his "new revelation" straight from Yeshua, (or so we are told to believe), was to be considered "another gospel," and who wants "another" anything when you can have the original?**

**Now for the hardest question I can ask fellow Christians.**

**Answer for yourself: If, by any chance, we have been misled, accidentally or unknowingly, to misunderstand atonement and forgiveness of sin and its relationship to the death of Yeshua, would you not want to know the real truth from rightly interpreting the whole of the Bible and not just by reading Paul's miss-quotations before you die and meet Yeshua and the Father face-to-face on Yom Kippur? Because I answered the above question affirmatively, I propelled myself to further study to make sure I truly understood what the Rabbi from Galilee really said. In doing so I found that much had been added to the New Testament and changed as successive church councils met over the early centuries. The doctrines of the Gentile Christian Church literally were in a state of flux, ever changing and being altered by the latest doctrinal creations. New meanings were derived foreign to the original meanings of the Scriptures which do great harm to what God intended we understand, but without a Hebraic perspective we have little chance of arriving at the original meanings of the text. That means if we try to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures by taking them out of their Jewish context and try to interpret them with the mind-set of Rome or Constantinople, then we can be assured we will not arrive at the correct meanings for such things as atonement, repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sin, faith, works, etc. In summary, unless we have a Hebraic perspective upon the doctrines of the Messiah of Hebrews chapter 6 for example, then your opinion is just as good as Irenaeus', Augustine's, Luther's, Calvin's, Edwards', Moody's, Sturgeon's, Graham's, etc.**

**Back on the curse and Paul's interpretation of Deuteronomy. The main point here that is overlooked by the vast majority of Christianity because they lack the Hebraic interpretation that goes with the context of the verse is that even a criminal is entitled to dignity of a decent burial. Even the criminal has a body made in the image of God and within even such a sinful wretch as a murderer and pedophile is a divine "spark" from God. Leaving his corpse hanging overnight is affront to God in whose image man was created. Contrary to what you have been told by Christian Pastors who failed to know the Hebrew behind the English of their Bibles the criminal atoned for his sin by his death and is no longer under a curse.**

**Answer for yourself: What is the last thing you and I will ever do? Die.**

**Yeshua, being a Jew, never replaced his faith with a new faith as most of have been taught to do. In the faith of Yeshua are teachings connected with atonement, and such teachings concern what a man must do and not do to atone for his own sin (sins of the Second Tablet of the Law only).**

**Answer for yourself: Do you possess all religious knowledge in the world? Then, just because you have not heard of something before does not make it wrong when you do.**

**Answer for yourself: Did your lack of understanding of algebra in High School mean it was not true when you were first introduced to it?**

**If you desire to know how atonement works in with the death of Yeshua, and understand it correctly, ask for our research papers on atonement, and learn how you can start laying away treasure in Heaven before you die, for God only knows that most of us have laid away little in thinking we have done a lot based upon what we have been taught so far in our lives by an anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic Contemporary Christian Church.**

**Now back to Paul.**

**Answer for yourself: If a sinner is cursed to be killed in such an undignified manner whereby he shames the body he was given by God and desecrated the Temple of the Spirit of God that energized his life, how much less so is an innocent victim like Yeshua (or any of his fellow Jews) who was unjustly crucified? This is the original interpretation from which Paul will make a far-reaching assumption that Yeshua carries all the curses of mankind upon his back.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever read Genesis carefully and seen what was really cursed in the events surrounding Adam and Eve and the eating of the forbidden fruit?**

**Gen 3:14-17**

- **14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:**
- **15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**
- **16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.**
- **17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; (KJV)**

**Gen 8:21**

- **21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. (KJV)**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see anywhere in these passages where man was “cursed” or “carries a curse” because he sinned?**

**Answer for yourself: “Exegesis” is where we draw out of the text what is said and “Eisegesis” is were we read into the text what we thing and concern not ourselves with what the text really says. Do you think Paul used “Exegesis” or “Eisegesis” in quoting Genesis in Galatians now that I have caused you to think about it?**

**Answer for yourself: Having already seen that Paul miss-quotes the verse in Deuteronomy about why a man is**

**cursed and applied it incorrectly to Yeshua, then don't you think that you should concern yourself immediately about the issues of atonement and forgiveness as taught by the Bible and not by men who quote Paul who misquoted the Hebraic Scriptures?**

**We have a real problem following Paul's thoughts if we try to parallel them to the Torah and Moses. Paul's perception of the Law turned this verse from Deuteronomy into a monstrous travesty. To accept his view of Torah is to conceive of the Lord Who gave it as unfair, capricious, and unintelligent. By contrast, Jews do not perceive of the Source of their Law as displaying such gross injustice as to call down curses on "everyone who is hanged" regardless of reasons.**

**Answer for yourself: How could the innocent incur such a curse?**

**Now for a real eye-opener. Any disapproval, regarding the hanged body, attached to the living, for allowing the corpse to remain overnight on the tree, cross, or gallows. Paul's thesis is that Yeshua redeemed mankind by taking a curse on himself through hanging on the cross, but as you can now see this conclusion is without foundation in the Pentateuch from which he quoted since no curse accrued to Yeshua for being hanged on a cross as an innocent victim and since no curse was put upon man because of sin. This however, does not negate the role of Yeshua as the Lamb of God as he served in type as both lambs of Yom Kippur; one of which died for atonement for sins connected to the First Tablet of the Law and the other lamb carried the guilt of sin away (but not the consequences….[Adam had to work by the sweat of his brow, etc.].**

**Answer for yourself: This little tidbit of information regarding atonement of the First Tablet of the Law and the role Yeshua played in it should make you curious as to how atonement for the Second Tablet of the Law is obtained. Does it? Get our articles on atonement from Bet Emet.**

**But to say that Yeshua became a curse for us in that he was cursed is a complete violation of the Scriptures from which he quotes.**

**Answer for yourself: Again this is hard for you to hear, but how could a Jew, versed in the Torah since a child, who had memorized the complete Old Testament by the age of 12 make such glaring errors in quoting the Hebrew Scriptures out of context such as the one I have shown you, unless the inescapable fact confronts us to acknowledge as other scholars attest…that Paul was a Gentile who converted to Judaism as an adult, thus explaining his lack of expertise in using and quoting Hebrew Scriptures as well as both his taking them continually out of context and his lack of acceptance as an Apostle of "equal standing" by the Jerusalem church and his successes among Gentiles in Asia Minor?**

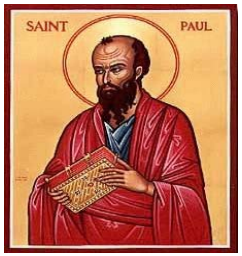
**Answer for yourself: Is not the evidence presented overwhelming?**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH




### DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT PAUL TRY TO MAKE US BELIEVE THAT ABRAHAM ALLUDED TO JESUS WHEN HE DIDN'T?

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

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**It never ceases to amaze me. Paul, a touted "Pharisee of Pharisees," and he butchered the Jewish Scriptures and takes them so much out of context and gets them so backwards that a person should wonder if such a person was Jewish at all. Well, I have found my answer to that on both fronts:**

- **First, the Ebionites left records describing Paul as a Gentile convert who later turned against Judaism. This is rather strange for a dedicated Jew as Paul is made to be in the New Testament.**
- **Second, when Marcion, a pro-Pauline disciple, collected the first New Testament writings which consisted of ten of Paul's epistles, the Book of Galatians in the first New Testament was missing all of chapter 3 but 4 verses. What? If these "pro-Pauline" verses had existed then an antisemitic Gnostic like Marcion would have jumped at the chance to use them in his debates with the Jews. Their absence from the first New Testament and Paul's earliest edition of the Book of Galatians reveals to the "truth-seeker" that these passages were most likely added later by someone and we attribute them to St. Paul and believe that they were penned from the hand of the historical Paul, when in fact, they were not. The fact of the matter is that the earliest editions of the Book of Galatians omit these verses and only later are they added to the Epistle that carries Paul's name today and is today considered inspired and inerrant and God-breathed, when the facts of the matter are that they were added to the Pauline Epistle long after his death.**

**The person who wrote these verses that come to constitute the bulk of chapter 3 of the Book of Galatians later, played a game of semantics in his perversion of the use of the Hebrew word "seed." When this writer makes it appear as if God spoke to Abraham about his “seed,” the writer changes the meaning of the verse to make it appear as if it is taking about "Jesus" instead of Abraham's "seed" Isaac and Jacob.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Abraham’s “seed” refer to Jesus or Jesus alone?**

**In Gal. 3:16 somebody added to the earliest collection of the Book of Galatians the following:**

***Gal 3:16 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one,***

## *And to thy seed (singular), which is Christ. (KJV)*

**For this Petrine writer the use of "seed" could only refer to a supposed historical Jesus. He makes it look as if Gal. 3:16 is a reference or prophecy concerning Jesus. Is it? It would appear to me by this rendering of the verse in Galatians, when referring to "seed," instead of "seeds, refers to Jesus. Does it really? The creation of this verse where it refers to the singular "seed" instead of "seeds" is made to be a prophetic prophecy referring to Jesus as we hear read and taught from the pulpits of our Churches today. This writer's proof texts from which Galatians 3:16 is created go back to Genesis 13:16. Let's look at what they say in their original context:**

## *Genesis 13:15 states: "For all the land which you see, to you and to your seed I will give it forever. ...unto your seed will I give this land..."*

**The word in Hebrew for "seed" is "zera." It has the same meaning and implication in the singular as in English. It means progeny or posterity & (carries with it the implication of plurality, not singularity, in other words, it does not limit to but one person. It is plural and refers to more than one person. Thus, it cannot refer to Jesus but to all who come to faith in God. Interestingly, in the plural in both English and Hebrew, the word "seeds" refers to planting. The meaning is clear from the standpoint of the context and the definition of the word. By the use of the word "seed" in Genesis, the writer of the Genesis Scripture was meaning a multitude of people who would be Abraham's descendants and could not refer to Jesus alone, although he being supposedly a historical Jew, would be included in such a designation! However, to read this passage, believing that the Gnostic Paul was the original author who referred to the historical Jesus when Gnostics never believed in a historical Jesus, shows the textual forgery of such a verse because it is made to be exclusive of a supposed historical Jesus, when the original word and quote from which it was taken does not mean "singularity." Such a meaning read into the verse does injustice to the text which it is based upon as well as the accurate meaning of the Hebrew word for seed! This Galatians verse which is added later to the Pauline Book of Galatians is nothing but a purposeful perversion and adulteration of the Genesis passage in order to falsely make it appear that the Gnostic Paul was a believer in a historical Jesus Christ when this was not so. Galatians 3:16 is a purposeful mistranslation and lifting out of context of the original Hebrew verse of Genesis 13:16 in order to created a false Messianic "fulfillment" of Scripture that is made to point to a historical Jesus which the Gnostic Paul ever believed in or even mentioned in his authentic Epistles.**

**We must never forget that regardless of what our accepted theologies about Jesus might be, given that they have most likely come through our uncritical acceptance of preaching and indoctrination in typical Christianity, unless these same theologies can be substantiated by in-depth study of the Hebrew Scriptures, and unless our theologies are based upon the proper transmission and translation of Hebrew Scriptures and Hebrew words, then when our ingrained Messianic Christian theologies are proven to be in error, then they must in the spirit of repentance and truth be rejected if a higher Spiritual truth exposes them to be erroneous!**

**Although rabbinic exegesis often states that seed applied to Isaac, it was apparent that through him the lineage from Abraham would flow to many progeny who would occupy the land with which God endowed Abraham. This was spelled out in Gen. 22:17, *"I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand at the seashore."* So much for this Petrine writer's argument about the identity of Abraham's seed as referring to Jesus "alone." Such a statement by this Petrine writer is a blatant misrepresentation of the truth of the true Hebrew words from which it is taken and an affront and an abomination before God.**

## *Deut. 4:2 2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (KJV)*

**Answer for yourself: Is is proper to change the Word of God just because you have a theological agenda?**

**Answer for yourself: Has other verses been taken out of context, purposefully misquoted and mistranslated from the Hebrew Scriptures in order to provide a foundation for the Roman Petrine theological agenda in the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: Are there numerous examples other than this one where a Christian anti-gnostic agenda has corrupted the true meaning of the Hebrew Scriptures in the New Testament?**

**It helps us to know the time in which many of these supposed Messianic Scriptures were written by the Hebrew Prophets. The Book of Daniel purports to be part history and part prophecy. Scholars today, both Jewish and Christian, have shown that the history given in the Book of Daniel is a fable and its Messianic expectations were never realized by the Jewish people. F Watson stated in The Law And The Prophets: The Ulsean Lectures For 1882 regarding the Book of Daniel: "Although pure fiction it was readily accepted by the Jewish nation." Can religious fiction have a profound effect upon people? It sure can, as the Daniel prophecies of the Seventy Weeks filled the nation with a false hope for a time. F. Watson goes on to state: "Who can doubt that the Jewish nation emerged from its struggle with Antiochus Epiphanes, more hopeful of its future, more devoted to its God, realizing more fully the treasure of its scared books? Strange to say, the book of Daniel, though it past was mythical and its expectations had been already falsified, was admitted into the Canon without hesitation or remark. One hundred years passed away, and Messianic hopes, which are not prominent in Apocraphal literature, which did not animate the people during the Maccabean struggle, filled every Jewish breast. The whole nation enthusiastically believed in the Messianic promise, and thought that the time of the fulfillment had**

**come. So bright was Jewish hope that it shone beyond the limits of the nation, and all through the East there was an expectation of the coming of some great One. What was the foundation of this hope? We can find none but the predictions of the Hebrew prophets. Why was the hope so strong just at that time? It was because they believed that Daniel's seventy weeks were well nigh fulfilled, and that the day of Messiah the Prince had come. And then mark this, for it definitely connects the Messianic hope of the time of Christ with the predictions of the prophets, the day of Messiah, as the Jews had determined it, passed by, as they believed, and Messiah did not come. Once again Messianic hope ceased to be a prominent element in Jewish life. Why was this? It was because their clearly defined expectations had been, as they thought, falsified. The Messianic prophecies had become an enigma of which they had lost the key, for they had failed to discern the Christ." This speaks to us once again about a struggle between a literal or historical interpretation of Scripture or a mystical and metaphysical interpretation of Scripture, key issues in the tension between the Gnostic Paul and the anti-gnostic Petrines of Jerusalem and later Roman Christianity.**

**Home**

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# FAITH OR DEEDS? DID PAUL MISREPRESENT ABRAHAM & DAVID IN HIS WRITINGS ON PURPOSE...AND WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

The apostle Paul continued his theme that the way to righteousness was only "his unique gospel"; through faith in Yeshua and not the performance of "good works as the fruit of one's faith as mandated by Torah." **What we fail to realize that Yeshua never taught this, in fact, he taught just the opposite.** **Ask and we will send you two articles contrasting the salvation message of Yeshua and Paul, and you determine for yourself if they both taught the same thing regarding eternal life. Let me give you a hint: They didn't!**

Paul continues to mislead us as he continues to preach his own brand of "justification" outside of the Torah. **Yeshua and his teachings did not agree with him, but no matter, Paul was a driven man.**

**Paul cited, as examples of "justification by faith alone," Abraham and David. In other words,** Paul argued that the virtue lay solely in their belief in God and not in their deeds. This had to be necessary for Paul if he was to sell "faith in Jesus" for salvation to the Gentile world. For Paul "faith without works" is not dead….no matter that the head of the Jerusalem church said otherwise (James 2-26).

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul correct it this matter…is faith without proper "works" acceptable with God?**

**Answer for yourself: How are we to define "works"?**

**Answer for yourself: Is anything pertaining to our faith considered "works" that validate our "righteousness" or is "works" confined to "obedience to the commandments of God"?**

**Let me demonstrate. You go to church.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this a "work" that validates your righteousness?**

**Answer for yourself: Did God ever command you go to Sunday morning church services, Sunday evening services, and Wednesday evening services as a way to obtain righteousness?**

**Answer for yourself: Or did God expect commandments, which when obeyed, to bring justification?**

**The latter of course. But Paul does not agree and has a "righteousness apart from the Law".**

**Answer for yourself: Having seen for yourself that Paul misused Jewish Scripture to create intentions other**

**than what the original author intended in the prior articles, do you think we need to investigate other things we have believed which Paul taught and which we were assured was true as well?**

**Answer for yourself: Since Paul can be proven wrong and in need of correction in many areas, then what does that say for most Christian believers today who attend churches who follow Paul's teachings more than Yeshua's teachings?**

# AN IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF ABRAHAM…IS PAUL CORRECT OR DID HE MISLEAD US TO TURN US FROM JUDAISM?

**The Patriarch Abraham trusted in God's promise to him that he would have numerous descendants even though the pronouncement was made when he was childless. "This was counted to him as righteousness." Paul quoted from Gen.15:6 but overlooked the real issue in Abraham's life that caused God to call him righteous.**

***Paul failed to acknowledge that the Torah and Old Testament amply indicate Abraham had been selected by God because of his repeated obedience to the Almighty's commands and not his faith alone.***

***Abraham's faith in God was not divorced from deeds.***

**Let me give you three examples where Abraham expressed his faith in concrete actions that got God's attention. It was these "concrete actions" in response to the Word of God that enabled God to consider and call Abraham "righteous".**

- **When he was told to leave his homeland and family in Haran, Abraham unhesitatingly departed with his wife, nephew, and movable possessions in tow.**
- **Even when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, the Bible records that he did NOT hesitate to fulfill God's charge. Throughout his life Abraham combine his faith with concrete acts.**
- **Again his faith is demonstrated in his self-circumcision which is a sign of the Covenant with God.**

**Answer for yourself: Other than Abraham's obedience to the Word of God spoken to him, what would have Abraham have to cause God to consider him righteous…..his lack of obedience to what God commanded maybe? Not hardly.**

***It was by putting that faith into action that Abraham demonstrated his steadfastness and faith to God.***

***It was by responding in obedience in concrete actions which were the fruits of the Word of God in his life that brought God's declaration of "righteousness".***

**As James said in his epistle, "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (2:17). "Like a sailboat without sails, faith without deeds is useless" to quote James again (2:20). It does not propel the believer to good and acceptable works.**

**Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe, Paul's teaching of justification by faith alone given to us by a man**

**who repeatedly misquoted the Torah on purpose and took words out of context to further his personal agenda against the Jerusalem church, or James, …….the brother and hand-picked Pastor of Yeshua's church which taught the same message as Yeshua about faith and works and who was an example for all to follow?**

**Without a doubt Paul divorces faith from action, thereby rendering his adherents to a flock of people professing mental assents to a creed or doctrine alone, in hopes that "belief" alone in Paul's doctrines and teachings satisfied God's requirements. It doesn't! Let me remind you that the "demons" believe as well, but their works are in error.**

**Answer for yourself: What have Paul failed to relate to his Gentile audience concerning Abraham and the reason for Abraham's selection by God?**

**No one is doubting that Abraham was not a man of faith but when Paul teaches a righteousness apart from the Law then he perverts the whole of the Jewish Scriptures and is creating a new religion where faith alone; faith in Paul's Jesus, is a substitute for true righteousness that never existed or exits apart from obedience to God and His Laws as one's fruit of their faith.**

***Gen 26:5 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (Hebrew is Torah). (KJV***

# AN IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF DAVID…IS PAUL CORRECT OR HAS HE MISLED US AGAIN?

**Let us examine Romans 4 to see just how confused Paul is.**

**Paul next turned to demonstrate David's faith. In Rom 4:7-8 he chose an untoward passage in Psalm 32:1-2:**

- **Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned**
- **Happy is the man whose iniquity God will not count against him.**

**It will be recalled that Israel's most charismatic king was no candidate for sainthood. He coveted Bathsheba, another man's wife, impregnated her, and when the unsuspecting husband, Uriah, would not be duped, David had him killed. When the prophet Nathan confronted David with his sins (he had broken three commandments--the sixth, seventh, and tenth ), he was contrite. Moreover, as punishment to David and Bathsheba, the child of the illicit union died. Due to his penitence, repentance, prayer, confession, and punishment, David felt that he was forgiven by God. He thereupon uttered a prayer expressing his relief and happiness. Psalm 32 is that prayer.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the Bible teaches that repentance, prayer, confession, and punishment are forms of atonement for your sin?**

**Probably not if all you have ever done in your life is read Paul and his twisting of the Old Testament.**

**Paul would have us believe that faith can be divorced from obedience and proper works and yet be acceptable to God.**

**Answer for yourself: You should ask yourself that if Paul is teaching something diametrically opposed to what has been taught since Gen. 1 if he should be believed at all, for how can Paul contradict Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua and be correct?**

**Some may say "Paul and his gospel does not contradict Moses, the Prophets or Yeshua" and may believe I to be wrong in the matter. Sorry, but you need to separate your emotion from the hard facts and re-read and study**

**the accounts in the Jewish Scriptures and determine for yourself what is going on in the context. If you will be honest with yourself and to God, as I finally had to do, you will realize what I did….I was wrong and had been wrong. I had let others teach me error which I never looked into to see "if these things be so." My error was reinforced by a flawed New Testament document which is choked full of misquotations, mistranslations, and passages taken out of context to justify a religious position foreign to what God gave mankind. That is the hard facts.**

**In Rom. 4:2 Paul states "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." Again in Rom. 4:3 "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."**

**Again in verse 5: "But to him that worketh NOT, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly [veiled reference to Gentiles], his faith is counted for righteousness."**

**Answer for yourself: Is there any doubt that Paul in Romans 4:5 teaches that the man who is without works but who has faith alone is righteous? He sure does.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this what David's life shows us? Now listen up. If that were the case then David would find no need to confess, repent, or pray. But he does. He does because he knows what Paul does not or has forgotten. Such spiritual disciplines such as prayer, repentance, and confession, as well as punishment from God, works for his atonement. It did for David and will for you as well.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul expecting us to believe that David believed that "faith alone" in the existence of God was enough for justification from sin? He sure is, but again the demons believe but tremble. Again this is a total misrepresentation of Old Testament truth.**

**Answer for yourself: From David's actions subsequent to his sin, are we to believe that David agreed with Paul, that David believed "faith alone without works" was enough to justify himself before God after he sinned? No way!**

**But Paul says it is.**

***The problem is that we have two different messages that contradict each other. Both cannot be true.***

**You have to choose one or the other. I would only ask you this…..which did Yeshua, the Prophets, and Moses believe?**

**Answer for yourself: How can Paul contradict 4000 years of Biblical revelation and be correct?**

**Simply said, he isn't but since the Roman church doctored existing letters and created a rival "torah" called the New Testament we are deceived today.**

**Answer for yourself: So did David, a man after God's own heart, believe that justification was available to one "that worketh not, but believeth on him (God) who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness"? Not on your life!**

**Paul is using David and Paul presents his argument in Romans by appealing to David for his authority. But a close reading of the life of David betrays Paul's error.**

**Answer for yourself: Does the footnotes in your Bible refer back to Psalm 32 as the source for David's revelation and Paul's teaching? It sure does.**

**Answer for yourself: How many of you ever thought to read Psalm 32 for yourself in conjunction with reading**

**what Paul said in Romans 4:5? Probably few of you.**

**If you take the time to read Psalm 32 you fill find that David never says such a thing as Paul would have us believe.**

## *On the contrary David in Psalm 32 says just the opposite of what Paul says in Romans.*

**In Psalm 32 and verse 5 David informs us that "he acknowledged his sin unto God" and "his iniquity he no longer hid from God." In other words David confessed his sin in prayer to God. In fact verse 5 tell us that only after David's confession of his sin did God forgive David's iniquity and sin. This is completely opposite of what we are told by Paul and expected to believe by Paul in Romans. God in Psalm 32 is not justifying a man who "worketh not," but on the contrary, only after David repented and prayed and confessed his sin [religious works] was he forgiven by God.**

## *David did just the opposite from what we were told by Paul to do. In reality, God justified not David because of his belief alone, but rather justified and forgave David because of his religious works.*

**David knew that faith without works is dead. So did James. It is Paul who rejected such and expects us to follow such follow. Tragically millions have. So to be blunt Romans 4:5 is a lie and misrepresentation by Paul of the truth one again.**

**For all his belief in God, David was not exonerated of his sin automatically. Faith alone did not "justify" him. He had to show sincere repentance and undergo some penalty for his wrongdoing. If anything, his faith made him realize that he could not escape the consequences of his sinful deeds.**

# CONCLUSIONS

**I trust that in these few examples given in the last articles we have a dichotomy; Paul saying one thing and the Prophet Habakkuk saying another; Paul saying one thing and James saying another, Paul saying one thing and David saying another.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is right and who are we to believe for truth?**

**Let me suggest that before you make a dramatic swing in your religious belief system to reject the teaching of Paul in some areas, let us examine in the next articles other evidence to the fact that we have followed the wrong gospel in following Paul instead of Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua. Shalom.**

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# DID PAUL MISAPPLY THE TEXT OF ISAIAH TO MALICIOUSLY ACCUSE THE JEWS OF BLASPHEMING THE NAME OF GOD...WHEN THEY HAD NOT?

**You are about to see the anti-Semitism of the New Testament at its strongest, and from the pen of the Apostle Paul no less.**

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul so twist the Jewish Scriptures to do this?**

**Paul proceeded with his argument against the Torah by asking Jews rhetorical questions regarding their observance of the Law. What escapes most readers, yet works negatively on our unconscious, is that the wording of his questions implied guilt on the Jews. He asked, for example whether Jews who preach against stealing, adultery, and idolatry do not steal, commit adultery, and rob temples. The inquiry became more like an inquisition and reached a crescendo in an indictment of the Jews as "blasphemers"!.**

**Answer for yourself: Are the Jewish people to whom Paul addressed actually "blasphemers" or is Paul taking great liberty with the Old Testament passage and saying something opposite to what God intended when He gave the passage originally to the Prophet? You will have to decide for yourself once you see the evidence.**

**Answer for yourself: Are we led astray by Paul when reading our Bibles because we are not competent students of the Hebrew Bible ourselves, thereby not able to discern when we have been manipulated and deceived by a writer for selfish motives, even Paul?**

**Tough questions I know, but the answers are equally difficult for most Christians. The following is just one of many examples where Paul has misquoted the Old Testament to further his agenda of establishing a Gentile expression of faith in which he is the recognized the leader since his apostleship was not accepted by the Jerusalem church to the degree he wished.**

**"As it is written," he says in Rom. 2:24, quoting from Isaiah, God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because *of you* [referring to the Jews].**

**It is no secret the Jews rejected Paul's message of a dying and rising god in the form of a man who died for the salvation of his followers. They knew what we don't today; namely, this was thoroughly a pagan concept played out over and over in the false religions of the Gentiles through such deities like Osiris and Attis. The Gentiles were well aware of such concepts and it was easy for Paul to build bridges into their lives by using concepts and terminology already familiar to his audiences.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul, in Romans 2:24, misquote Isaiah and take what Isaiah said completely out of context to show the Jews in an unfavorable light because they failed to accept him and his "unique gospel"?**

# EXAMINING THE MESSAGE OF ISAIAH AND IS PAUL TRUTHFUL TO IT?

**Now it is Isaiah's message which is twisted by Paul into the opposite of Isaiah's intended meaning. Paul added words which are not found in the original verse. If this is not adding to the Word of God I don't know what it. It is one thing to add your thoughts to a Prophet's message, but let us not loose sight of the fact that we grew up being told that the New Testament is the infallible, inerrant, and inspired Word of God. You must judge that for yourself. Let us examine the text so I might prove that Paul changed the message of Isaiah, and in doing so, slanders the whole of the Jewish people, when in effect, Isaiah said just the opposite; that the persecutors of the Jews blasphemed God.**

**It is worthwhile to read the entire verse from which the above passage was selected (and altered) to better understand what the prophet was saying in God's name. Isaiah 52:5 reads as follows:**

***Now, therefore, what do I do here said the Lord Seeing that My people has been taken away for nought. They who rule over them howl, said the Lord And My name is continually blasphemed all the day.***

**All of Isaiah Chapter 52, including this verse, recognizes the necessity and promise of restoring Israel to a position of glory. Speaking in God's name, Isaiah said that the very *enslavement of God's people by the heathen Gentiles had become a desecration of His name* [and not the Jewish people themselves as Paul would have us believe]. The pagan rulers who conquered Israel did not realize that they were God's tools in the punishment of Israel. These pagan captors had become so boastful that they attributed their conquest of Judah to their own power and to God's weakness to protect His people.**

***That attribution of helplessness to the Almighty and the degradation of His people are the reasons God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles, and not the supposed rejection of Yeshua as Messiah as we have been told and led to believe through the reading of Paul in the New Testament!***

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul throw us off tract and deceive the reader by saying "it is written," thereby setting us up to believe that Isaiah the prophet not only described the Jews of Paul's day in a bad light, but also had prophesied about the Jewish people and their rejection of Paul and his message? He sure does.**

**Take just a second and understand the seriousness of using "it is written" to give Prophetic authority to what Paul is saying, when in effect, the Prophets said no such thing. In Texas, we call this a lie! Paul is lying and most are not aware of the fact because they are not well-versed in the Old Testament. Their churches have spent way too much time in reading and preaching the slanted message of Paul in the New Testament which does great injustice to what the Prophets intended we know. I cannot speak for you, but I feel robbed and am upset about being lied to about the most important thing in the world…my relationship with God. The Bible should be the last place we look to find deception, but it isn't. The sad, sad fact of the matter is that millions of Christian believers have never compared what Paul wrote with the original writings of the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Until you do, you will never see what I am saying and you will be tempted to discount what I say because it is different from what you or your Pastor has said. I am not wrong. Look it up for yourself!**

**Answer for yourself: If I am to believe that the Holy Spirit led Paul in his writings, then how do I come to understand and reconcile how Paul takes a passage referring to the pagans' mistreatment of their Jewish captives and the pagan's ridicule of the Jews' God for not delivering them out of their confinement as stated in the context of Isaiah the Prophet and using the verses of Isaiah in the manner the way Paul does in blaspheming the whole Jewish people by subscribing to them corrupt ethical conduct?**

**Answer for yourself: I ask you, was Isaiah's intent to point out the ethical failures of the Jewish people in his**

**original context? No.**

**Answer for yourself: So in reality when Paul said “it is written” he makes up something which the original author never intended and it is "not written after all"? He sure does.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul misquote Isaiah in Romans 2:24 on purpose? Either the Holy Spirit is poorly equipped to inspire the writings of those He chooses to promote His revelation, or else He had nothing to do with and we have only to look to Paul and his hidden agenda and motives to arrive at why he so badly misquotes and misrepresents the Isaiah passage in Romans.**

**For me, as well as many of the scholars I have studied agree….Paul, knowingly perverted and distorted the passage in Isaiah on purpose to self-justify himself to his Gentile readers. Paul feeds his ministry off the anti-Semitism already prevalent among his non-Jewish audiences. This passage, among others, have been read through the millennia and have contributed to the slaughter of millions of Jews by those who think they are doing God's pleasure. So sad that we never compared the verse in the first place. In so doing, Paul teaches something that is not true and it ends up ultimately in the New Testament and most, when they read it, believe it to be God's viewpoint on the matter. Such a tragedy is not confined to this one passage, because Paul does this on several occasions as I will continue to show you if you have the courage to keep reading.**

**Answer for yourself: Still think the New Testament is "God breathed", infallible, and inerrant? Think again! It is time for serious study if you ever hope to come to the truth about this document.**

**Shalom.**

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# DOES PAUL MAKE IT LOOK AS IF HIS PAULINE-CHRISTIANITY HAS REPLACED THE RELIGION OF BOTH MOSES AND JESUS?

**Let me reiterate. As I have shown with several example, the twisting of the context and textual sense of the Hebrew Scriptures was a preparation for the real aim of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which was to demonstrate the ascendancy of Pauline-Gentile Christianity over Judaism. The writer was intent on keeping the converts won over to him [success of a personal agenda at the expense of correct interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures to a people unfamiliar with the Hebrew Scriptures] as well as won over to the new religion he spread at all costs.**

**Answer for yourself: How better way to win a "name" for yourself which one could not get through the Apostolic Church in Jerusalem, regardless of the visions you attest you had?**

**Paul was determined to not lose ground or prestige against any incursions by the Jewish competition. He began to build his case with a contrast between Moses and Jesus. The writer described Moses as a faithful servant in God's house and Jesus as the faithful son over God's house (3:5-6). The people were warned against giving up their belief in the "Pauline Jesus" by a long excerpt from Psalm 95:7-11 stated as follows in Heb. 3:7-11:**

***Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion During the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried Me And for forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation. And I said, "Their hearts are always going. astray And they have not known my ways.: So I declared an oath in my anger they shall not enter into my rest.***

**The apostle-author interpreted this passage as a warning to the people against hardening their hearts and not believing in Paul's Jesus. Paul would have his readers understand that refusal of his Jesus and his unique message [faith in this non-Jewish Jesus without obedient works for acceptance by God] would be considered apostasy by God and would bring upon those who reject his [Paul's Jesus] worse suffering than the Israelites endured because of their lack of faith.**

**However, the original verses in the psalm refer to incidents recorded in the Pentateuch and are taken out of context by the writer again. They are a reminder and an admonition to Israel against disobedience to God such as rebellion against God's chosen leader, Moses, regression to idolatry, and a lack of faith in God's ability to provide water for them.**

## *The original context is "not hearing or heeding God's voice" and not "Paul's voice."*

**The choice for the Jew today, as well as in the latter first century, is easy. They must obey the God who**

spoke to them at Sinai and refuse "another gospel," even if threatened by Paul.

**The irony to the reasoning of Paul escapes the casual reader of the Bible:**

***The Israelites were punished for deviating from Mosaic Laws, commandments, and injunctions, not for returning to them. For them to accept faith without obedience would only bring upon them the judgments of old.***

**Answer for yourself: Can you now better understand why the Jews today, as well as in the early centuries could not accept Pauline Christianity; a Christianity that presented "faith in a person 'alone' without obedience to the Law and commandments for acceptance before God?"**

**Answer for yourself: Please pay attention to this next question. Was it ignorance of Hebrew Scripture [you would think this impossible for a Jew who at the age of 12 had the whole 5 Books of Moses memorized] or cynicism that compelled the writer to use as a proof text an excerpt relating to conformity to the very Law he wanted his readers to shun?**

**Answer for yourself: Would you expect miss-application of Scripture from a Jew who grew up with the Hebrew Scriptures who would know other Jews would catch his error, or a non-Jew somewhat unfamiliar with the texts he was working with?**

**He even quoted a passage referring to chastisement for not following the commandments of the Law.**

**The last thought in the above excerpt deals with entering God's rest. The writer interpreted this variously as Sabbath rest or rest in a heavenly sanctuary for believers in Yeshua [not those who believe in God and obey His Word]..**

**Consistent with the reference in the psalm to the wandering in the wilderness, the psalmist associated God's rest with entrance into the Promised Land. After forty years of roaming in Sinai, the Israelites would naturally consider an end to their wandering as a rest. Besides they had the Sabbath throughout their travels. Sabbath rest was proclaimed in the Ten Commandments which the Israelites received at the outset of their journey. The promise of a final celestial rest did not preclude the desire and hope for rest and peace in one's mortal existence. This was the promise in the Torah to Israel for obedience unto God and His Word [not belief in a man without obedience]. According to the story in the Torah, the generation of the desert did not have respite or rest in its own land due to its violations of the covenant with God.**

***What you must see as ludicrous is that the Hebrews epistle writer was urging on his readers even further breach of that covenant.***

**Answer for yourself: Is it any wonder why the Jewish people reject Christianity today, as well as in the early centuries, when they are told to reject openly what they were judged by God for not observing faithfully before [failure to obey the commandments of God]?**

***Statements made to various heroes--Abraham, Moses, David, or others -- were again incorrectly presented as if God had said them to Yeshua. He did not, or at least the Bible does not record for us He did.***

Psalm 110:4 is a case in point. **The author of Hebrews liked this verse and cited it three times in 5:6, 7:17, and 7:21. It is a declaration to David defining his status, viz.:**

- The Lord has sworn and will not repent.
- You are a priest forever
- After the manner of Melchizedek

**This phrase was proof to our author that Yeshua was designated by God to be high priest just like Melchizedek (5:10). The rest of his thesis was built on this assumption. Let us not forget that "Melchizedek" was used by Gnostics for their pattern and examples for a non-Torah message. The word 'forever' meant to the apostle that Yeshua lived forever because of his resurrection, and therefore, had a permanent priesthood. Since Yeshua became a priest through God's oath, his position was superior to that of Moses who had not acceded to the priesthood (yet Moses was a Levi and brought sacrifices for a short time). Furthermore, Jesus could now make atonement (save) for those who come to God through him (Gentiles).**

**Answer for yourself: Referring back to atonement and the miss-quotations by Paul which confused the whole idea of Biblical atonement, can you now be open enough to consider the possibility that we are "saved" by Yeshua, not by his death to remove a non-existent curse as I have shown you did not exit except in the mind of Paul, but rather, his death [called "blood" in the New Testament] and resurrection served as a catalyst to break out from a Gentile-hating Judaism in the first century a small group of men, who were so moved by the resurrection of Yeshua, as to follow him and his word to "go into all the world ….and teach them [Gentiles] to observe [obey the Torah/Law/commandments as the fruit of their faith in the One God] those things commanded by Jesus?**

**Dear brother and sisters, we have a been given a way that brings you and me to God, not through conversion to Judaism, but through repentance and obedience to the message followed by every Jew; a message, that when obeyed, brings "right-standing" before God. Such a message is obedience to the commandments of God as the fruit of our faith in God. Had it not been for Yeshua and his death and presumed resurrection then there would have been no outreach to the Gentile world where the Laws and Covenant of Noah was taken to the world and we would not know God as we do today, unless a Jew knocked on your door to reveal the God of Israel to you.**

**Answer for yourself: Has any Jew knocked on you door lately to teach you about God?**

**Guess what? They were not in the first century either. The Jewish people would be judged for such ambivalence and neglect in 70 C.E. by the destruction of the Temple, for they, like us, often fail to obey the Second Tablet of the Law, thus bringing atonement for our sins, which is coupled with the atonement provided for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law at the end of our life in our death. The Rabbis teach that some sins cannot be atoned for in this life and the soul that sins shall die and in our death we atone for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law. These are sins between man and God and involve the gamut of idolatry to blasphemy of God's Name. In the New Testament this is referred to as the unforgivable sin (that is as long as we live and until we die).**

**For the writer of Hebrews Jesus was seen as their High Priest; he was believed to be interceding for his followers. Understand this is allegorical at best. Since Yeshua has an eternal priesthood promised by God, according to the writer of Hebrews, and Moses did not, Yeshua' ministry was superior to that of Moses in the eyes of this writer. But when the writer of Hebrews makes his final implication of his reasoning from the above-quoted verse that the new priesthood of Yeshua required a new covenant that make the former covenant invalid he makes a fatal mistake, for as I have shown you previously the "new covenant" is a "renewed, repaired, and restored" covenant, and not a replaced one. The word for "new" in Hebrews had a completely different meaning from the word "new" as used in the original passage from Jeremiah 31!**

**In 2 Samuel 6:14,17 and 8:18 David and his sons assumed priestly garb and duties. In the aforementioned verses the status of David and his sons was confirmed as priest-kings although they were not priests on the same level as Aaron and his descendants. The Davidic kings did not acquire the powers of the priests such as**

**making sacrifices and offerings for the nation; the priests performed these duties. Furthermore, the Aaronic priesthood was sanctioned by God to be eternal (Ex. 40:15) and indeed, has continued on to this day, albeit without Temple or sacrifices.**

**In this way, the perpetuity of the priesthood for the Jews was guaranteed by God. Moses' greatness was in his leadership, organization, and inspiration of his people. He was not considered deficient because he was not a member of the priestly class nor was he ever in competition with a deity for he was not considered divine. Neither he nor any man was to be worshipped. As for Yeshua, he was never a priest or a king during his earthly ministry. . Although life eternal had been vouched for him, he did die as did Moses, but was believed to be resurrected.** That's the difference to Yeshua's earliest of believers! The author of Hebrews whole theory of Yeshua's priesthood is based on an false assumption on his part that the Old Covenant was replaced by a New Covenant with a new Priesthood which I have already shown you to be nonsense in prior articles on this subject. A simple Hebrew word study will prove the writer of Hebrews to be wrong and reveal his purposeful misquotation of the Jewish Scriptures! I challenge you to look up in Jer. 31:31 the Hebrew word for "new" and then transpose its meaning over the Greek meaning or English meaning for "new" when quoted in Hebrews.

**Answer for yourself: Regardless of what the Greek or English word for "new" means in Hebrews, should it not carry with it the same meaning as the original passage in Hebrew from which is was taken and that was "renewed, repaired, reaffirmed"?**

**Answer for yourself: What does the author of the Book of Hebrews fail to understand about Yeshua's Priesthood that any Jew would know since a child (remember I told you it was Hellenistic/Greek in production)?**

Simply that all covenants of God are consecutive and cumulative. In other words just because God made a covenant with Noah He did not cancel the covenant He made with Adam. Just because God made a covenant with Israel through Moses He does not discard and annul the prior covenants made with Adam and Noah, etc.

**Answer for yourself: Since God is not making a "new" covenant to replace older covenants, how do we deduce as the writer of Hebrews would have us believe that God has to make a "new" covenant to replace the "old covenant" which has the Aaronic Priesthood when the covenant with Noah** ALREADY **contained the Priesthood of Melchizedek?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now better understand and see that God did not desire a "new" anything since the existing covenant with Noah (quoted as applying to Gentiles in Acts 15 by Yeshua' church) contains an already existing Melchizedek Priesthood?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now better understand the use of "renewed, restored, repaired" instead of "replaced" as referring not only to covenants but to the Melchizedek Priesthood as well since is had been vacant since Noah's time? WOW…that is quite a revelation!**

**Answer for yourself: What are the functions of a Priesthood?**

Namely to lead people to God, and has not the ministry of Yeshua and his followers, and the Great Commission which was fueled by his death and resurrection, been responsible for taking God, Torah, and Israel to the heathen Gentile nations of the world, where almost everywhere today monotheism is the foundation of all manifestations of Gentile religions in the world?

Then without a doubt, Yeshua had and is functioning as a mediator (allegorically) to get pagan Gentiles to God, who according to Ephesians 2:11 they are born "Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision, in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Messiah (to lead you to God), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

**For such a gift we have an eternal debt to Yeshua and we rightfully understand the religion he intended we inherit, have faith in, and obey.**

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# ROMANS 9-11: THE CRUCIAL CHAPTERS OF NEW TESTAMENTANTI-SEMITISM AND REPLACEMENT RELIGION

**The central issues of Paul's letter to the Romans were how to become a member of God's new people and how to maintain membership in it. At least that is what he started out to do with his Galatian's letter which was no more than his treatise on the Covenant of Noah and the non-Jew's exemption within this Covenant of the requirement of circumcision. Circumcision was being required of the Gentile by the Jews due to their hatred of the Gentile and this enforced procedure outside of their Covenant was an effective deterrent in keeping the Gentiles apart from the Israel of God. Paul was originally going to set the matter correct. However we see over the life-time of this man an evolution of his beliefs where he will reject the totality of the Torah for both Jews and non-Jews.**

**Answer for yourself: Before we begin were you aware that the vast majority of Romans, chapter 9-11, were not in the First New Testament in 150 A.D.?**

**Answer for yourself: What does that say about Pauline authorship of these very anti-Semitic passages?**

**Marcion, himself strongly anti-Semitic and a Paulinist, is responsible for collecting and producing the first New Testament containing ten of the Pauline writings.**

**Answer for yourself: Marcion, Being such a "Pauline" disciple, then what reason could there have been for Marcion's rejection of these chapters which were written by Paul as seen by their complete absence from Marcion's collection of Paul's letters?**

**As you can see this is a sticky issue. The "theology" within Romans 9-11 was definitely not written by an apostle or even Paul for that matter. However, most scholars admit today that the writer of these chapters continues in the Pauline vein of thinking and expresses the further evolution of Paul's ideas in these texts. That being the case and since our Bibles have these chapters under the heading of Pauline authorship then I will address the matter as if Paul is the writer for our purposes in this article**

**Coupled with this "theological evolution" of Paul's rejection of the Torah (Law and Covenant requirements) we see the rejection of the Jewish people as the Israel of God and with their rejection of Paul's religious thesis in its ultimate form we find the abundance of literature surfacing, some by Paul and others who carry on his ideas, that seem to cast the whole of Israel as the "rejected" of God for not accepting Paul's unique Gospel. This is born out by the fact that missing from the First New Testament collected by Marcion in 150 A.D. are such passages we have today that include Rom. 9:1-33, 10:5-11:32 and all of chapters 15 and 16:26. I find it rather amusing that these three chapters, Rom. 9-11, the vast majority which were not in the New Testament, until after 150 A.D. and most likely written by Irenaeus in 200 A.D., begin with "I lie not." All of chapter 9 did not appear until the Second**

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**New Testament appeared with Irenaeus in 180 C.E. The whole treatise of chapter 9 that ends with the "cornerstone" becoming for this Pauline writer a "stumbling stone" because of the rejection of the Jews of Paul's "gospel of righteousness apart from the Torah." As if that was not enough we again have the purposeful misquotations in v. 33 where we are mistakenly informed that the Scripture says to "believe on him shall not be ashamed" when it says differently in Isa 28:16 16 from which we are told to believe is a quote:**

***Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. (KJV)***

**Belief was to be in God and His Torah for that is the "foundation stone" of Isaiah 28 and not Jesus as Paul or this Pauline writer would have you believe. As if that was not enough we find that not only is all of chapter 9 of Romans missing until 180 A.D. but only 5 verses existed in Marcion's pro-Pauline New Testament from chapter 10 through chapter 11:32. This means only 8 verses existed from all of Romans 9-11 in 150 A.D. Let us not forget Marcion was rich and nothing could have stood in his way from collecting all of the known Pauline corpus of writings and being pro-Pauline and anti-Torah these verses from our now existing Rom. 9-11 would have been exceptional verses for Marcion to use in his rejection of Judaism and the Torah. For the thinking believer who is familiar with any of the anti-Semitism that crafted the foundation of the New Testament the only conclusion available is that the lack of their presence in the First New Testament is due to their not being in existence then. We have here the continual writing of anti-Jewish propaganda by the non-Jews and the passing it off under the name of apostolic authority. This is by far not the only example of the continual alteration of not only the oral traditions but written records by the non-Jewish Church. But be not mistaken.....this is nothing more than the elaboration of the Pauline religious thesis.**

**Answer for yourself: What was Paul's religious thesis?**

**Paul alleged that God's promises to the prophets were realized with Jesus, that Gentile Christians were heirs to the covenant God made with Abraham, that Israel's possession of the Law had not made them more obedient or better than Gentiles, and that no one is justified before God on "legal performance." Furthermore, Paul's religious thesis continues, Israel's rejection of Jesus had paradoxically given Gentiles a chance to enter the covenant. He stressed that the worship of God was spiritual, not physical, as with burnt offerings at the Temple, and that Jesus was a human sacrifice for the expiation of the sins of his believers (Rom. 5:6, 8; 1 Cor. 5:7, 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:15; 1 Thes. 5:10).**

**If the Epistle to the Romans has affected Christian theology more than any other book, then it may also be said that Chapters 9 to 11 of the letter have been among the most influential passages in Christian literature. In them Paul, or the Pauline writer, consolidated his credo which included, at its core, mixed feelings and messages with regard to Judaism and it's adherents. To some Christians, much of the New Testament's anti-Judaism reached its culmination in Rom. 9-11. Other Christians have read a less adverse view of Jews in these crucial chapters. In his inimitable way, E.P. Sanders summed up the ambiguity as follows: "All the scholarly labor that has been spent on Paul's attitude to the law has resulted in no consensus....We know what law Paul was talking about. Yet the search for what he "really meant" goes on (E.P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 3).**

**As regards Paul's "real" message, let us listen to what a few students of his teachings have heard. This is the conclusion which the Catholic theologian, Gregory Baum, drew about Rom. 9-11:**

***"All attempts of Christian theologians to derive a more positive conclusion from Paul's teachings in Romans 9-11 (and I have done this as much as others) are grounded in wishful thinking. What Paul***

*and the entire Christian tradition taught is unmistakably negative" (Gregory Baum, Introduction to Faith and Fratricide, p. 6).*

**Here is the view of another scholar, Gunther Bornkamm, whose opinion is:**

*"That the Jews in Rom. 9-11 are Paul's opponents and that the epistle is 'throughout polemical against Jews and their understanding of salvation'" (Gunther Bornkamm, Paul, as quoted in K. Stendahl, ibid., p. 132).*

**There is a virtual unanimity among scholars on the *impact* Paul's writings have had on Christians. As Stendahl has said:**

*"Christian use of Scripture, and not the least of the Pauline epistles, caused developments of Satanic dimensions" (K. Stendahl, op. cit., p. 126).*

**John Gager said in the same vein:**

*"Put simply the most thoroughgoing and systematic repudiation of Judaism in early Christianity was articulated under the banner of Pauline authority" (John Gager, The Origins of Anti-Semitism, p. 175).*

**Unfortunately, this repudiation was not confined to early Christianity but is prevalent to this day. The reason is not hard to find. It is due to a widespread, shared understanding by most Christians, whether scholars, clergy, or laymen, of what Paul was saying.**

# WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF ROMANS 9-11?

**The messages most Christians have registered in their reading of Romans 9 to 11 are:**

- **God has replaced Israel with the Gentiles as His chosen people (9:3, 6-7).**
- **Israel's obstinacy deafened and blinded the nation to belief in Jesus (10:2-3, 14-17, 21).**
- **Jews cannot achieve righteousness with the Law or without faith in Jesus (9:30-32).**
- **Through a mystery which Paul discovered, Jews have been hardened so that the Gentiles would be grafted on to the stem of Israel and receive salvation (11:17-20,25).**
- **Israel will ultimately convert to Christianity in accordance with divine promise (11:23, 26).**

***Now understand that the above anti-Semitic ideas were not written by Paul but a pro-Paulinist around the years of 180 A.D. as these writings make their first appearance through Irenaeus and his response to Marcion's First New Testament...we now have a Second New Testament....Was Paul on life-supports to have written this?***

***The anti-Judaism by the Gentile Church is continually written and passed off as Scritpure....I wonder what YHVH thinks of this???***

**Numerous verses in these three chapters of Romans, as in the rest of the letter, (and in his other epistles) accord with Paul's antinomian (against the law) doctrine (Ephraim Urbach, op. cit., p. 670-671). Paul's charges contained one which Matthew (23:31) and Luke (11:47- 48) repeated, namely that**

Jews had killed their prophets. They carried this wickedness of old into their current behavior as they envied and begrudged Gentiles the salvation God had given them. Finally, Jews became "the enemies of the gospel," because they did not believe Paul's teachings. Paul went on, in a subsequent chapter, to cast Jews in the role of a menace. He asked his respondents to pray that he would be "rescued from the unbelievers in Judea" (15:30) thus implying that Jews posed a threat to his life.

It is not difficult to see how these vivid and ugly portrayals of Jews, traced to a man who was elevated to sainthood as well as others who carried on his tradition, created a feeling of hatred and revulsion in generations of his readers.

## WHO REALLY KILLED THE PROPHETS...DID PAUL LIE AND MISLEAD US AGAIN?

**In Rom. 11:2-3 and 1 Thes. 2:15 (considered by some scholars as an interpolation (addition) several decades after his death) Paul quoted Elijah's complaint that Israel had killed God's prophets and had torn down His altars. So far as it goes, this is a true citation from 1 Kings 19:10,14. But there is more--much more--to the story which Paul did not tell. The Northern Kingdom of Israel at this period in Elijah's life was ruled by Ahab and his Phoenician wife, Jezebel (ca. 876- 855 B.C.E.). She completely dominated her husband, especially in religious matters. She had been a Sidonian princess and brought her pagan Baal worship into Israel when she wed Ahab. She had altars built to the heathen cult and installed priests of Baal to lead the idolatrous worship. She persecuted the prophets of Israel and ordered many slain when they protested against her immoral regime (Kings 18:4). She clashed with Elijah and threatened to kill him following a dramatic contest on Mount Carmel between him and her prophets of Baal. After Elijah proved the impotence of the pagan god, he had to flee from Israel into Judah to escape Jezebel's rage. It was at this moment, when the great prophet was in hiding, that he cried to God that Israel had killed His prophets. It happened in Israel; but the deed was done while Israel was under the domination of a ruthless Phoenician heathen who had instructed her foreign henchmen to pursue and murder the Hebrew prophets. The Israelites who defended their prophets and opposed Jezebel and her idolatry were also her victims. Eventually, Ahab was killed in battle and Jezebel was executed by the Israelites.**

**In the history of Israel, prophecy lasted from Samuel to Malachi, a period of about 600 years. During that time there was not a single well-known prophet who was killed including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Nathan, Elijah and Elisha. All were forthright and boldly outspoken, expressing views which clashed sharply with the popular mentality or with those in power. Yet, in all of those six centuries the Bible recounts only one case of murder of a prophet under the auspices of Jewish rule. Jer. 26:20-23 relates that King Yehoyakim of Judah (607-597) killed Uriah, an otherwise unknown prophet, for his prophecy. This record hardly warrants the portrayal of Jews as prophet-killers, a picture the New Testament repeatedly drew in the Gospels and Epistles.**

## HOW IS JUSTIFYING THE HEATHEN TO MAKE ISRAEL JEALOUS?

Paul or a pro-Pauline writer claimed that salvation was given to the Gentiles because of Israel's transgression in order "to make Israel envious"! Nothing is said about the worthiness of the Gentiles or their lack of transgression.

**It is understood from many teachings in the Old Testament that God is just, and that being so, then you should have a hard time reconciling the above premise as stated by Paul; namely, that God saves the Gentiles in order to make a nation envious. This is utter nonsense. It is a known fact that God judges mankind according to their Covenant with Him and how they lived according to their Covenant stipulations. The Gentiles are basically under the Adamic, Edenic, and Noahide Covenants. Within these the non-Jews find their responsibilities toward**

**God as well as their privileges and blessings. This is a fact that Paul should have known if he was a "Pharisee of Pharisees" since this was basic "Bible 101" to any Pharisee. Yet the writer of these "Pro-Pauline" passages in Romans 9-11 writes as if the Gentiles, up to that time, were without relationship with God or without Salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth than this perverted premise. But this is not the only problem. Paul would have us believe that God all of a sudden created Salvation for the non-Jews in order to make the Jew's jealous.**

**Answer for yourself: Where is the Godliness in this, the fairness no less? What about the non-Jews who died before Paul and Jesus...were they without a way to God?**

**The writer of Romans 9-11 would have the Gentile readers of this epistle believe such a thing as if they were without God and simply that was not the case. These Gentiles, not familiar with Judaism, would not necessary know this for themselves but anyone familiar with Judaism knows this basic fact that God had always extended Salvation to mankind and it did not begin with Jesus or Paul. But the problem with this Pauline ideas goes even deeper.**

**Answer for yourself: If Person A sins (the Jews) does that automatically make Person B (the Gentiles) deserving of reward?**

## *This Pauline statement is simply stupid and goes against every teaching on righteousness in the Old Testament!*

**Perhaps Person B (the Gentiles) sinned also, or sinned even more than Person A (the Jews..and this is understood since they lived without codification of the Laws of God to the extend possessed by the Jews) and neither merits salvation. The apostle's words seem to express the attitude of a man who wants "to show" people who, he felt, rejected him that he has surpassed them. This "idea" is what I have been sharing with the readers of this website since the beginning. What better way than to elevate "his Gentiles" over "those Jews" and arouse their envy.**

**Answer for yourself: But is this "perversion of the teachings of the Old Testament" a theology, or an adolescent nonsense?**

# DOES GOD REWARD DISOBEDIENCE? WELL...PAULINISM SAYS HE DOES!!!!

**Among Paul's or a pro-Paulinist writer's more baffling passages in Romans, verses 11:30-32 stand out. Here they are:**

***Just as you (Gentiles) who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their (Jews) disobedience (30), so they too, as a result of God's mercy to you, have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy (31). For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all (32).***

**This is possibly the most convoluted backward reasoning that mankind has ever devised and we can lay it at the feet of Paul. In other words, for Paul the Jews' disobedience brought God's mercy to the Gentiles and the Gentile's disobedience would eventually obtain mercy for Jews. For Paul not obedience, but disobedience, would provide everybody with a reward from God. For Paul, furthermore, God has consigned all men to disobedience; they are forced into this state. This is a pessimistic view of God and a sad outlook on, and for, mankind. Paul's doctrine, that God acts on the basis of grace, hardly creates an incentive for good behavior. It would make more sense from an ethical standpoint to portray God as rewarding good behavior and punishing bad. Paul did not**

**convey such a message here. He was so intent on refuting the value of the Law with its demands for good deeds that he sent confusing and paradoxical messages, viz.:**

- **Disobedience calls forth God's mercy.**
- **People cannot be good because God makes them bad.**
- **One people's disobedience results in another people's reward.**

# PAUL'S PEDIGREE...BUT HE COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN ALL THAT HE TESTIFIES OF

**The more Paul assailed Jews, the more he reminded his audiences that he came from Jewish ancestry (Acts 23:6, 26:5; Gal. 2:15; Phil. 3:5; Rom. 9:3-4). As if it were necessary to offer proof in the face of a real or imagined challenge, he identified the specific tribe from which his forbears came. It was not enough for him to say simply that he was a Jew. He claimed descent from the tribe of Benjamin (in two of his epistles, Romans and Philippians) and in so doing, he overstated his case.**

**Two thousand years ago it would have been preposterous for a Jew to claim that he had exclusive descent, or could trace his descent, from any one tribe. It would be especially difficult with Benjamin because it was a small tribe and got absorbed into its large neighbor, Judah. There is an excellent chance that some progenitors of any Jew were from Benjamin (or Dan or Simeon). But a declaration that implied descent only from Benjamin--or even Judah--could not be taken seriously. For this to happen would require that a certain branch of a tribe remained isolated and never intermarried with members of other tribes--for over 1800 years. Not only did members of the tribes intermarry but after the exiles of Israel and Judah, tribal distinctions were lost. Since Judith had been the dominant and largest tribe, most people were affiliated with it and took its name as their identification, It would be impossible, after several hundred years, to trace one's ancestry to a specific tribal affiliation. If Paul were really a Jew, it is unlikely that he would have made such a fantastic claim. Nor is it likely that he would have called himself a "Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5) which expresses the superlative. Even the leading rabbis in the Sanhedrin and the academies did not arrogate to themselves such a title.**

**Paul's choice of Benjamin as his ancestral tribe may be related to: the name Saul, by which he was called in Acts by Luke before he went into the Greek world. King Saul, of course, came from the tribe or territory of Benjamin.**

**Answer for yourself: Now having been told the truth concerning the anti-Semitic pro-Paulinist religious ideas of Romans 9-11 that were not written until 180 C.E. with Irenaeus then should we possibly not rethink this whole matter of a "righteousness apart from the Torah?"**

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# DOES PAUL TAKE OUT OF CONTEXT THE PSALMS IN ORDER TO MAKE HIS POINT...EVEN IF THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR INTENDED NO SUCH MEANING?

***Heb 1:5 5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? (KJV)***

**The writer of Hebrews asked rhetorically to which angels God ever expressed the above-quoted verses. The assumption that the uninformed reader of Hebrews gets is that the above statements were said to Yeshua and that God had not even spoken them to angels.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the above true; did God speak this to Yeshua before the foundation of the world, or has the writer of Hebrews taken completely out of context a quote from the Psalms and changed the meaning of the intended author because he knew his uneducated Gentile readers would never know he had altered the verse; besides it supported his "personal" theology? Little has changed today with the august ignorance of the Jewish Scriptures in Christendom.**

**Indeed, God did not say these words to angels. The Tanakh made it clear that the promises were addressed to David and Solomon and to their heirs. There is neither mention nor hint of Yeshua or of a genetic kinship between God and any human, ruler or otherwise.**

***Quotations from Psalms flow one upon the other throughout the letter of Hebrews. These quotations are applied to Yeshua despite their complete lack of association with him in their original setting and are repeatedly taken out of context by the writer***

## THE MISUSE OF PSM. 97:7 BY THE WRITER OF HEBREWS

**The pro-Pauline author claimed in Hebrews 1:6...**

# *"when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.'"*

**This, allegedly, is a quotation from Psalm 97:7 but in reality it is not! The alteration from the word "gods/Elohim) to "angels" is characteristic again of Gnosticism and reflects the background of the Hebrews writer.**

**The correct phrase is from Psalms as taken from the Jewish text in the Stone Edition Tanakh is as follows:**

# *Humiliated will be all who worship idols, who pride themselves in worthless gods; bow to Him (YHVH), all you powers*

**The Hebrew word used for "powers" is**

**430 'elohiym-**

- **1) (plural)**
  - **a) rulers, judges**
  - **b) divine ones**
  - **c) angels**
  - **d) gods**
- **2) (plural intensive -singular meaning)**
  - **a) God, a god, a goddess**
  - **b) god-like one**
  - **c) works or special possessions of God**
  - **d) the one true God**
  - **e) God**

**Answer for yourself: What word is added by Paul or whoever wrote Hebrews in Hebrews 1:6 that is not in the original verse from Psalms which gives an entirely different meaning to the quote than was originally intended? The word "angel."**

**The word 'angel' does not appear in this psalm which is a hymn to the glory and power of the YHVH over all creation. The particular verse in question spoke of the shame accruing to idolaters (people) whose gods must prostrate themselves before God. Obviously, the psalmist did not believe in heathen gods but used the popular language.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see a slight difference between the worship of God by these "false gods" and "idolaters" and the Angels of God worshipping Yeshua, especially when Yeshua says in Luke 4:8 that it is written that "Thou shalt worship the LORD (Yahweh, the Father) Thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve (worship)? The writer of Hebrews has changed the subject of the Psalm from worshipping YHVH to worshipping Jesus which is idolatry. Such is the irony in this verse but which leads millions into the by product of Essene sun-worship and these are the powers behind these traditions concerning Jesus we find in the New Testament. Later the Gentiles will come along with their own forms of sun-worship and take up and elaborate upon these rudimentary Essene principles. All you ever wanted to know about his tragic turn of theological events attached to Jesus can be found at:**

**http://bennoah1.freewebsites.com or http://bennoah1.calliejo.com**

**and**

**http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com**

***So, in conclusion, no angels were summoned in this psalm that has been so misquoted to worship Yeshua. Rather all heathens were told that their gods would down before the Supreme Being...YHVH. Again this pro-Pauline writer misquotes the Hebrew Scripture for his personal agenda.***

## The author of Hebrews continued to quote numerous verses from Psalms and to introduce them as though they were written about Yeshua which they were not.

Let me take time to re-affirm my trust and faith in Yeshua, but I do take issue to those who misquote the Hebrew Scriptures and make Yeshua into something God never intended he be or do. I take issue in making Yeshua more that what he really is and making him any less than what he is supposed to be. In other words, I strive diligently to worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth as Yeshua suggested in John 4 and you should as well, and that means that I don't confuse the two as that would be idolatry! It is way past time that you devote your life and part of your time to recover the truth about Yeshua/Jesus before it was altered and changed down through history!

**We must be careful not to read Yeshua into every passage of the Bible, yet at the same time not fail to understand which verses refer to him and thereby correctly understand his purpose and message. The Psalter consists of 150 poems or songs of praise by different composers, beginning probably with David and were collected over a period of centuries. The last of these lyric poems was written at least two hundred years before Yeshua in the Maccabean period. The subject matter runs the gamut from praise of God, the Torah, Zion, David and his dynasty to the suffering of the nation of Israel; from the question of ethics and the right way to live to the problem of evil and the triumph of the wicked.**

***To suggest that the many authors were not writing about their feelings and reactions concerning events in their time but about a person born long after their deaths is to disregard their implicit messages and to ignore the historical circumstances in which they lived.***

It has been said, and a wise man will ascribe to this axiom, that "all the Bible was not written to me but all the Bible was written for me." Likewise not all the Bible is written with a hidden Yeshua behind every vowel and syllable, but we should study to show ourselves approved, rightly interpreting the Bible. That means, when the passage possibly refers to Yeshua we should understand such, but not read him into every passage and thereby loose the original meaning God intended we have. This is easier said than done since so much purposeful misapplication and misquotation of the Jewish Scriptures occur in the New Testament (on purpose). We literally have to compare each verse with any possible passage from the Jewish Scriptures when possible. Over time the picture will become clear....we have been deceived!

Furthermore, to assume that what these writers in Psalms said about their contemporaries "fulfilled" the beliefs of an era and time foreign to them [the age of Yeshua] is to remake them all into unconscious soothsayers. All of this stretches credibility beyond the breaking point.

**The psalmists were talented people, but they were not clairvoyants or supernatural creatures. While much of their wisdom has application to our time, as does the Tanakh in general, that is characteristic of classical literature. It is true of Shakespeare also. Their insights sometimes have a modern ring. But neither they nor the psalmists wrote, for the most part, about people or events after their time.**

***Also, later application of a literary work has validity only when its passages are quoted correctly and when they have a relevance to the correct situations to which they apply.***

***THE BOTTOM LINE IS THIS....HUNDREDS OF MISQUOTATIONS AND MANIPULATIONS OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES WERE MADE IN NEW TESTAMENT IN ORDER TO PRESENT JESUS TO THE GENTILES AS A GOD...THEY ALREADY HAD MANY...ONE MORE WOULD NOT HURT....2000 YEARS AGO SUCH CONCEPTS OF GODMEN WERE COMMON..SO TODAY WE FAIL TO REALIZE SUCH FALSIFICATION OF THE TEXTS HAS OCCURRED OR THE PURPOSE BEHIND IT OVER THE LAST 2000 YEARS***

***BUT ANYWAY YOU LOOK AT IT TODAY IT IS IDOLATRY SO SAYS GENESIS TO MALACHI....THE BIBLE JESUS USED AS WELL AS HIS FAITH...BIBLICAL JUDAISM WHICH HAS A PLACE FOR THE NON-JEW IN A DIVINE ETHICAL MONOTHEISM***

***BARUCH HASHEM***

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# DID THE WRITER OF GALATIANS 3:5-6 TAKE THE QUOTE OF ABRAHAM AND FAITH FROM GENESIS 15:6 COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTEXT?

***Gal 3:5-6 5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (KJV)***

**The pro-Pauline author of the above verses contrasts in them "works" and "faith." He would have the reader believe that "righteousness" is accounted to man because of his "belief alone without works" and makes such an argument by referring to an Old Testament verse from Gen. 15:6 where he expresses to his readers that they like Abraham can be "righteous" before God by "belief" or "faith alone." Disconnected from this "righteousness" is works or anything having to do with "obedience" or "conduct" or "works of the Law" as understood as the Commandments and Law of God. The whole chapter of Galatians 3 is a treatise that replaces "faith and obedience" in God with "faith in the Pauline gospel and Paul's presentation of Jesus and his death, burial, and resurrection (Christ crucified)." In such a presentation we find later in the chapter that we can be assured the Law has been replaced by "Christ crucified" and this when one accepts "faith in Paul's Jesus" then they are no longer under the Law.**

***Gal 3:24-25 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (KJV)***

**Key to the whole treatise in Galatians is the quote from Gen. 15:6 where Abraham is lifted up as the example for all non-Jews to be "justified by faith alone" as Abraham was (supposedly).**

**Answer for yourself: Was Abraham really justified by faith as we are told in this chapter of Galatians?**

**Answer for yourself: Has the writer failed to express the hidden nuances of this Hebraic verse and misled his audience on purpose?**

**Answer for yourself: He the writer not know himself what this verse he used actually meant in the Hebrew or did he know and not reveal that to an audience that he was assured would not know and did so for theological purposes in his rejection of Judaism?**

**We first must confront the fact that Galatians chapter 3, all but for one 4 verses did not exist in the First New Testament collected by Marcion. Being a "pro-Paulinist" Marcion collected ten of Paul's epistles including what is believed to be Paul's first epistle; the epistle of Galatians. Missing within it is almost all of Galatians chapter 3. This chapter is the very core of Galatians' theology and to this we must look since it does not appear till after 180 A.D. when Irenaeus produces his response to Marcion in the Second New Testament.**

**In this article we must deal with the passage from Gal. 3:6 where it is stated "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."**

**Answer for yourself: To whom does the "him" refer in this verse: Abraham or God?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you realize that the answer to the above question will have a very important part to play in how you approach your Christian faith?**

**Answer for yourself: Does the writer of these verses after 150 A.D. take this passage from Gen.15:6 completely out of it's Hebrew context and use it in such a way at make it appear that if you have "faith" in Paul's theology and his unique "gospel" that you are considered righteous by God where the original passage never, in the Hebrew, equated "righteousness" to a "belief" but to actions? He sure does and we need to look into this.**

# GEN. 15:6 IN IT'S HEBRAIC CONTEXT

**One of the things that I first learned in Seminary was a class on Hermeneutics whereby we learn "how" to interpret the texts of the Bible according to a system of laws that are imposed upon the text whereby we can be assured we are drawing out of the text the correct meaning. These are varied and I don't intend to get into them deeply but let me say simply that if a passage is take from it's original context and used contrary to the way the original writer intended the passage to be understood then we are guaranteed not to have arrived at the meaning both the original writer and God intended. We must remember we are dealing with a foreign language and culture and are striving the best we can to arrive at the truth and without such stick adherence to the laws of interpretation the a passage can be made to mean whatever anyone wants it too. Hopefully we can do better than that.**

**We one become familiar with Gen. 15:6 in both the Hebrew and it's Jewish context we find the following. According to the Artscroll Tanach Series commentary on Bereishis (Genesis) Vol. 1 we find some very important information for our consideration concerning this verse that brings a completely different understanding of the verse as used by the author of Gal. chapter 3.**

**Let us divide the verse into two parts for our study. The following is taken from the above commentary of Genesis by Artscroll Tanach Series.**

## *And he (Abraham) trusted (placed his confidence) in HaShem*

**Rashi tells us that Abraham, unlike before, did not request a sign from God as he had previously when he was told by God that he would possess the land. Directing his trust completely to God's Providential care of every individual, Abraham discarded his astrological calculations as in his day mankind looked to the stars for answers about what the future held. The above verse in the Hebrew represents a much deeper concept than "faith" alone as the writer of Galatians 3 would have us believe. It suggests total submission in the sense that one places his total confidence and seeks all his guidance and attitudes in God. It suggest the selling out of the whole being to God!**

## *And he reckoned it to him (as) righteousness*

**Answer for yourself: What is the subject of the verse?**

**Answer for yourself: Who does the "him" refer in the above verse?**

**Answer for yourself: The author of Galatians would have us think that God reckoned it to Abraham that his belief that he would one day have a son was "righteousness." Is this the true meaning of the verse that "belief" in something accrues "righteousness;" like belief in a promise from God or belief in Jesus as Paul presented him? Does God really reckon one righteous because he accepts Paul's ideas about Jesus and believes in Jesus'**

**death, burial, and resurrection or some Pauline ideas of some form of atonement attached to the death of Jesus as Paul would have us believe?**

**These are very, very important questions and issues and the WHOLE of the New Testament & the Pauline epistles (2/3 of the NT) is build upon this concept of belief in these Pauline doctrines about Jesus in order to be considered "righteous" before God because we are told that Abraham "believed" in God and he was considered "righteous by God." With Abraham as our example we are led by Paul to believe that if we, like Abraham, believe in what Paul says and his unique understanding of Jesus which all other Jews rejected around him, then we like Abraham are considered "righteous" before God.**

## *Is this Pauline premise concerning Abraham the biggest lie ever told by any man that ever lived or is this the truth?*

**Rambam (Maimonides), and the vast majority of Rabbis before him and since understand the verse as following. Rambam, as he points out says, why should faith in God, especially by one as great as Abraham, be considered a virtue? Abraham knew what all men should know...**

## *God is not a man that He should lie (Num. 23:19)*

**According to Rambam we are speaking of a man who, on the basis of his faith, was later prepared to sacrifice his beloved son, and had withstood all trials; how could he not show his faith in such a good tiding from a God that does not lie (that God had promised him a son from Sarah and that God would fulfill his promise)? What Rambam is saying is that it took little faith to believe in God's promise of a son but an even greater faith later to sacrifice your son because this same God had commanded it! So Abraham's exercise of his faith concerning his son was inconsequential overall in the whole scope of the later example of Abraham's faith in God when it came time to sacrifice his son.**

**Rambam therefore suggests that the subject of the verse is Abraham:**

## *He (Abraham) considered it an act of righteousness on the part of God that He would promise him a child unconditionally (in God's righteousness) and without regard to Abraham's merit, and the possibility that he might sin.*

**The verse says, therefore, that Abraham's trust in God's promise was total, for, since it was an act of Divine righteousness on God's part, it was irreversible. This concept is fundamental. When God promises to do good, He does not retract His promise even if the generation is guilty of infractions. God promised Abraham the good tiding of a son and Abraham believed that the fulfillment of it was guaranteed and this was a credit to God's righteousness that He would fulfill what He had promised even if Abraham had maybe displeased God or sinned since the giving of the Promise! The unconditional love of God and His honoring of His Word to Abraham regardless of Abraham's failures and sins was understood by Abraham as a manifestation of God as a Righteous God above all other gods. It would take a truly righteous God to honor His word regardless of man's failures toward Him. Abraham understood God honors His Covenant with man even if man breaks the same Covenant toward God. Such is the "righteousness" of God and this explains why the subject of the verse is "Abraham" and "Abraham reckoned it to God as a form of God's righteousness."**

**The Gentile writer of Galatians chapter 3 (written after 150 A.D.) turns the whole verse backwards and changes the subject from Abraham to God. This not only changes the whole understanding that**

Moses and the writers of the Jewish Scriptures intended but suspends the whole theology of the New Testament on an erroneous interpretation of faith. The whole of the New Testament and it's personation of "faith" is WRONG! Somebody either did not know Hebrew or listen to the Jews who knew how to interpret this verse. It is a very sad day indeed when we as non-Jews think that we are better prepared to understand passages from a book that originated in a different language and culture and presume we can know it better or arrive at a better interpretation that those whom were given it directly from God. Such is the hatred and blindness of anti-Semitism and if you are not aware that the early Church Fathers were baptized in it then it is time for you to wake up. Rome used "religion" as a political glue and Jesus was for them "quick glue" and they literally recast him and all that concerned him into a Gentile remake of Pagan Mystery Religions and Gnosticisms.

When the stark reality of this Jewish teaching hits your head and your heart then you realize that these "blinded Jews" have been right all along (by the way Rom. 9-11 where the Jews are called "blinded" did not appear in Romans until 180 A.D. as well and was written by later anti-semitic Gentiles like before). When you come to realize that God never considers anyone "righteous" because of any mental ascent or belief in anything apart from the actions such a "belief" produces then this should scare you to death since you are reading a New Testament document that not only totally misrepresents the doctrine of "faith" but assures you that you are no longer under the Law which are simply what God considers the appropriate responses that He desires from mankind in RESPONSE TO HIS FAITH. Not only have we been taught faith wrong as Christians and followers of Jesus but taught wrong concerning how to respond to God in the first place. Millions die daily as "good Christians" and appear before God as disobedient idolators because they never studies or checked out their faith. I challenge anyone to look at the Jewish documents and tell I am wrong. It is absolutely ludicrous to believe Isaiah and the other Prophets who tell us Israel is the light for the nations and then approach their writings and their authorities as they teach and interpret them and tell them Rome corrects them and Paul has another idea. If you have read this website on Paul then you know that Paul was himself a Gentile and a rejected bad Jewish convert and this explains a lot of his purposeful departing from Judaism in part as well as those who would follow in his footsteps. It should be coming together for you by now!

## SINCE THE NEW TESTAMENT GETS IT WRONG...THEN WHAT IS BIBLICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS?

**Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim 3:53 defines "righteousness." It is, according to Rambam, "giving everyone his due." He explains, however, that the Torah uses the word in a different sense. In Scriptural terms, paying a laborer his wages or repaying a debt is not called "righteousness." These "ACTIONS" are not "beliefs" but are something we owe whereby we received a benefit from another.** But be not mistaken the subject of "righteousness" is not "belief" or "beliefs in a theology" but "actions" resulting from such a belief." This is the same thing we just saw concerning Abraham!

Rambam goes on to say that according to the Jewish Scriptures "righteousness" is **PERFORMED** when we **FULFILL our DUTIES to our fellow man** when prompted by our moral conscience **- e.g. healing the wound of a sufferer; returning a pledge to a poor debtor (Deut 24:13). Likewise, ACTING virtuously and displaying faith is God is called** "TZEDAKAH" (righteousness) because we thereby act righteously toward our intellectual faculty (beliefs). What you need to see is that beliefs must be connected to right actions and these actions have been previously defined by God as the Law which just happens to be reflective of our Covenant responsibilities to both God and mankind in our Covenant). It is these Laws that when obeyed makes a distinction between obedience to the Laws of God resulting in Godliness or the failure to observe them which results in conduct often interpreted

**as "good." It make look good but it is not Godly and God knows the different and it is these same Laws that we are told we don't have to obey in the New Testament that all we need is to believe in "this" or "that" and God will consider that our "righteousness." I just show you that this whole concept is wrong and is a lie!**

**It is in this sense whereby Abraham obeyed what God had said that God accounted Abraham's faith as "righteousness manifested" in that it was Abraham's faith that RESPONDED in concrete ways (Laws of God which He had previously commanded) whereby God saw Abraham walk out his faith in Him. Only because of Abraham's obedience to God and His Word was Abraham accounted righteous!**

***Gen 26:5 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.***

**(KJV) 8451 towrah or torah- law, direction, instruction a) instruction, direction (human or divine)**

- **1) the body of prophetic teaching**
- **2) instruction in the Messianic age**
- **3) the body of priestly direction or instruction**
- **4) the body of legal directives and law**
  - **1) law of the burnt-offering**
  - **2) used of special law, codes of law**
  - **3) custom, manner**
  - **4) the Deuteronomic or Mosaic Law (within this body of Laws we find the Laws of Noah which Abraham kept)**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Abraham kept and obeyed God's Torah (instruction) and God's Law?**

**Again the term "righteousness" in a Biblical sense denotes those righteous actions which God does as a benevolent God without regard to man's merits or deeds and which man does in response to his faith in this Righteous God which Abraham knew! Such goodness by God toward mankind will continue despite man's actions. Abraham, convinced that he was undeserving, regarded God's promises to him a manifestation of God gracious "tzedahak-righteousness."**

**Answer for yourself: So who is "accounted righteous" in Gal. 3:6...Abraham or God?**

## *Abraham was never righteous apart from his obedience to God's Laws which are always understood as his "faith" in demonstration*

**I hope that you can begin to see that the same writer who would have us misunderstand the passage he used from Gen. 15:6 also says in the same chapter that "when faith in Christ is come" then "you are no longer under the Law (schoolmaster). The is completely contrary to what Gen. 15:6 said and the message of Genesis through Malachi.**

**Galatians is a lie from start to finish. What began for Paul as an attempt to no longer enforce circumcision upon the non-Jew by the Jews for acceptance by them because of their dislike and hatred for the non-Jew later becomes at the end of his life and for his followers the repudiation of the**

**Law in it's entirety and this is seen in the continual writing of anti-Law religious propaganda after 150 A.D. in the name of Paul and the Apostles in much of the writings of the Gospels. Without such knowledge the Christian is left with no recourse than the reading of the New Testament and the rehearsing of error and disobedience until he dies and then receives an Eternal Correction by HaShem. Do you want that to happen to you because you never took the time to seriously study your faith?**

**Answer for yourself: Are we going to have to wait until we die to find out that the New Testament and Gentile Christianity is so terribly wrong in many of the doctrines that they teach?**

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# IN THEE SHALL ALL THE NATIONS BE BLESSED...WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

***Gal 3:8 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: We must begin with exposing another lie in Galatians chapter 3. The pro-Pauline writer begins by saying "And the scripture, forseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith." What Jewish Scripture says that God's plan is to justify the heathen by faith? Well we just looked at it in Galatians 3:6 where the writer has previously misquoted and lifted out of context Gen. 15:6 by saying "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." In a previous article we demonstrated that when one looks as Gen. 15:6 we find "he" and him" and ascertained through study of the Rabbis and Jewish Commentaries that the Jews have understood the passage as referring to Abraham who believed in the YHVH's promise to him despite his unworthiness and counted it toward God's faithfulness that God would fulfill His promise to Abraham despite Abraham's sin and failure. This was for Abraham a mark of the righteousness of God. Therefore Abraham believed God and Abraham counted it to God for just another example of God's righteousness. The writer of Galatians not only got it wrong but continues to lead his readers astray as he builds off this false premise and that false premise being that if you have "faith" in this Pauline "message" then God considers your "faith" in this Pauline doctrine "righteousness." The original verse properly interpreted does not support such an understanding as Gal. 3 tries to put forth.**

**The writer goes on to say "in thee (Abraham) shall all the nations be blessed. Here again we have a division of interpretation among the Christians and the Jews.**

## TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION

**It is amazing what you find when you really read Christian commentaries on the New Testament. In my hand at present is a very respectful commentary series on the New Testament entitled The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; in particular, the commentary on Galatians. I used these extensively in Seminary as they deal heavily with the Greek words and their original meanings. In this Tyndale Commentary on Galatians on p. 93 when addressing Gal. 3:8 is says "When Paul says "Scripture says," or as here, "Scripture, forseeing," HE IS NOT CREDITING THE BIBLE...!**

**Answer for yourself: What does this mean that when Paul says "Scripture forseeing" or "Scripture says" in relationship with Christian commentators who are Greek scholars when they say PAUL IS NOT CREDITING THE BIBLE?**

It simply means that there is no Scripture to refer back to for Paul's statements but in Paul's mind that for him; and I quote from p. 93, "it is the equivalent of saying 'The Lord of Scripture says." In other words such statements used by Paul as "Scripture says" or "Scripture forseeing" means that for Paul such wording corresponds to what Paul's ideas of what Scripture elsewhere means or should have meant concerning his Gospel of Christ. the stark reality of the matter is that Paul is lying to his readers and has absolutely no Jewish Scripture to use for his ideas yet he says he does. This is lying about God! The only problem with what Paul does, and what the typical Christian does not know, is that we have 3500 years of Jewish Scholarship which disagrees with Paul! If you have never read the Jewish authorities on their "own" Scripture you should then I challenge you to read Paul who wrote 2/3 of the New Testament and ask yourself where he got his ideas from since he is supposed to be a "Pharisee of Pharisees."

This same commentary goes on to say, and I quote, "in no sense, no Christian could speak of the gospel being preached before Calvary" yet we are supposed to believe that Paul's gospel and understanding of "Christ crucified" was somehow preached to Abraham and that Abraham's supposed faith in the death of Jesus as interpreted by Paul much later was his "salvation." I have already shown you how the same writer completely teaches the doctrine of faith in relation to Abraham incorrectly and now we are supposed to believe from the same writer 2 verses later that this "faith" in a religious doctrine concerning man crucified thousands of years later was his "salvation." I can believe almost anything but when you interpret the text wrong and build all other conclusions off of such false assumptions then this stretches the limit of any believability!

In reality the whole context of Galatians chapter 3 verse 8 is a fraud and as you now know was written long after Paul's death and the first copy of it to be seen occurred in 180 A.D. with Irenaeus' response to Marcion's First New Testament. In reality no such "gospel" was ever preached to Abraham because the whole Pauline concept of "Christ crucified" for salvation is built off of pagan sunworship and can be easily proven if you have the courage to read it for yourself.

# HOW DO THE JEWISH RABBIS AND SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITIES UNDERSTAND GEN. 12:3 FROM WHICH GAL. 3:8 QUOTES?

**First of all let us see how the verse reads in the Jewish Masoretic text as taken from the Stone Edition Tanakh:**

## *"I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you"*

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that it says "shall bless themselves" by you?**

The Art Scroll Tanakh Series on Genesis tells us on page 431 and following that the simple meaning is" A man will say to his son, "Be like Abraham." This is the meaning of the expression whenever it occurs in the Jewish Scriptures. The best proof that this is the correct interpretation is the indisputable usage of the similar phrase in Gen. 48:20 where we find "by you shall Israel invoke blessings saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and Manasseh.'"

According to Ramban, this simply means that all families of the earth will do the same and pattern themselves after Abraham and in so doing receive the same blessings of God.

Now we need to pay close attention. Ramban adds that the word also could be understood in the "passive," implying a certain universal doctrine that the phrase is to be rendered: "through you will all of the nations of the earth be blessed" and Abraham will become the source of all blessings to the world by virtue of himself (for his sake). In other words because of Abraham's righteousness shall all

**the nations of the earth be blessed because wherever Abraham lived the blessings of God were to overwhelm him and the lands and people where he abided. Whereever Abraham lived those who lived around him would benefit from the blessings upon the land, livestock, harvests, etc. In order that the nations recognize and elevate Abraham God was to begin to shower His blessings upon the lands of those in whose midst Abraham lived during his life and in this way the "nations" would partake of Abraham's blessings (like Philistia and Egypt).**

**Another perfect example of the above interpretation comes from Gen. 22:18 where it says:**

**"and all the nations of the world shall bless themselves by your offspring, because you have listened (obeyed) to my voice."**

**Answer for yourself: Does it really say "because you have listened" to my voice or "because you have obeyed" my voice? Let's look at the Strong's number for the word used in the Hebrew:**

**8085 shama` (shaw-mah'); a primitive root; to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc.; causatively, to tell, etc.): KJV-- X attentively, call (gather) together, X carefully, X certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, X diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear (-ken, tell), X indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim (-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, X surely, tell, understand, whosoever [heareth], witness.**

**We saw earlier that the "nations" were to "bless themselves" by following Abraham's example and we see again that his example is not "faith alone" as Paul would have us believe but "faith and obedience" to the Laws and Commandments of God! The pro-Pauline author of Galatians chapter 3 has it completely backward! Now pay close attention. On page 812 of the Art Scroll Genesis commentary on Gen. 22:17-18 we find that the Jewish Scriptural authorities are in agreement that because as a result that Abraham had "listened" to God's voice to sacrifice his only son and followed through on it with obedient actions as the fruit of his faith where he took his son to Mt. Moriah and laid him upon the altar that Abraham's descendants were to receive the blessings of Abraham because "Abraham did not withhold his only son." Because Abraham "did" something in response to his faith God would bless his descendants. Notice again "faith" and "obedience" was the message and not "faith alone" as the writer of Galatians 3 would have us believe. The lesson we must learn is to live and "be" like Abraham; a man who responded with concrete actions with his faith.**

**The issue for Christians is that if these "Laws" as understood as concrete actions demanded and commanded by God are no longer applicable as the New Testament and the writer of Galatians maintains, then we are relegated to doing what we consider "good" instead of what God has declared as "godly." The Church today does a lot of good works but many of them are in direct violation of the Commandments of God. It might appear as a "good work" to those who do not know that the Commandments of God demand a different conduct or behavior be done in that particular instance but God knows the difference. To replace what God commanded done with a "good idea" of your Pastor or Church, when in goes again the positive and negative Commandments of Scripture, is sin and you, not knowing the Commandments because your church has followed Galatians 3 and other such writings that completely twist the Jewish Scriptures, sin before God in doing what you think is "good" when God sees the breaking of what He commanded be done which to Him is Godly. This principle is the terrible fruit we see in Christendom today worldwide where, as Jesus said that man has the propensity to do what he esteems right and let the absolute love and truth of God as seen in His Word go lacking! For Jesus this was sin!**

***Mark 7:13 13 Making the word of God of none effect (Laws and Commandments) through your tradition (that is not the way we do it in our church), which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (KJV)***

**This sickness in Christianity affects everything from our worship to our tithing. We think we are doing right**

**but a quick comparison with the Commandments of God, His Laws concerning these two issues alone, will show anyone who can read that what they and their church is doing is a violation of what God said He wanted done. In reality, and without knowing, Christians dress up today and go to church as Nadab and Abihu and worship with strange fire before God since they have bought a "false gospel" by the very one who warned us not to accept anything but what he said!**

***Gal 1:8 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (KJV)***

**How clever of Paul for he did write that but if you have spent any time reading and studying the Pauline website you understand the rationale of such a saying by Paul. I will leave you with a though from God instead of our pro-Pauline writer:**

***Lev 20:7 7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. (KJV)***

***That means we don't have a better idea or plan "B" as the writer of Gal. 3 would have us believe!***

***Let us learn by Abraham's example correctly related to the reader and not some completely backward account of it as we find in Galatians 3***

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# GALATIANS 3:10 AND THE PURPOSEFUL MISQUOTE OF DEUTERONOMY 27:26...WHY?

***Gal 3:10 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. (KJV)***

Well we encounter another verse that is a lie in Galatians chapter 3. So far we have seen many attempts by the writers of Galatians chapter 3 to purposefully misquote and twist the Jewish Scriptures in a negative way in order to misrepresent the Law and make it "negative." Of course this has to be done if you are going to do away with it and the task was not hard as the Gentile audiences to which these epistles were aimed had little or no prior understanding of Hebrew or the Jewish Scriptures. Little has changed today in the Gentile Church. We must suspend in our thinking when reading this article that Galatians chapter 3 was written long after 150 A.D. and most likely around 180 A.D. when Irenaeus responds to Marcion's first New Testament with one of his own. The writer of Galatians chapter 3 does a masterful job of writing and misquoting the Torah in order to make it look as if the Law has been replaced by "faith" in Christ. Here we have in Gal. 3:10 a rather scary passage that God will curse people if they "continueth not in ALL things that are written in the book of the Law."

**We all sin and come short of the glory of God and this is without doubt. We are told in Gal. 3 that if a man does not "continue in ALL that is written in the book of the Law" that his failure to continue in "ALL" the Law brings a terrible curse from God or so we are led to believe. My Christian New Testament has a reference verse from which the Galatians 3 writer quotes and that verse is Deut. 27:26.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Deut. 27:26, from which the Gal. 3 writer supposedly quotes in verse 10, really say that God will curse mankind if he does not "continue in ALL that is written in the Law." The answer is simply "NO"!**

In the Tyndale Commentary on Galatians on page 96 it says "Now it is quite true that the Hebrew Bible does not have the word "all" in this verse; it simply says "Cursed be he who does not confirm (uphold) the words of this Law, to perform them."

**Let us see how the verse is written in the Hebrew:**

***Dt. 27:26 Accursed is one who will not uphold the words of this Torah, to perform them. And the entire people shall say, Amen.***

When consulting the Stone Edition Chumash concerning the commentary and exegesis of Deuteronomy chapter 27 verse 26 which is the verse that is misquoted in Gal. 3: 10 we find some

interesting comments. Ramban explains "who will not uphold" to mean that every Jew (person since part of the Mosaic Laws are contained in the Covenant and Laws of Noah) must accept the Torah's validity in full, and dare not claim that even one of its commandments is not relevant. He next says that "this curse" is not imposed upon a person who commits a sin, only one one who denies that a part of the Torah is God given or relevant. The curse is not upon one who breaks a commandment although disobedience toward God never brings His blessing. But the curse of this verse refers only to those who look at the Torah and say that it is not from God or not relevant or as Christians have been taught is "passed away" and " not binding." This is dangerous ground for a Christian to not only live in but die with such beliefs cherished instead of the truth concerning the Torah. The Torah become not relevant to all who believe the theology of Galatians 3 and other such replacement religion as expressed in the New Testament. Ramban cites approvingly a view in the Jerusalem Talmud (Sotah 7:4) that this curse applies to anyone who can influence others to be loyal to the Torah, but does not care to do so, especially people in positions of authority, who have the power to mold the behavior of others. Even someone who studies the Torah and is rigorously observant, but is unconcerned about the shortcomings of others, even though he can help them, is included in this verse. This is very scary when you understand the scope of Ramban's comments and consider what Christian Pastors teach concerning the Law and the Torah being passed away today and that mankind is no longer under the Law/Torah. The verse as understood by the Rabbis is that the curse comes to one who denies the Law's validity for one's life and that God gave it all and it's observance is demanded by God. We are to perform these Laws as our test of our love for our God and such performance, as best we can, is commanded by God. Denial of any of the above brings the curse of God and the New Testament is full of religious doctrine that pays the way for such curses in one's life; either now or after we die.

**These verses also implies the obligation upon every individual to support Torah study, each according to his ability.**

Now if you believe that the Jews are better equipped to interpret their own writings than the monks of Rome then we have a serious problem on our hands. It would seem from the Jewish commentators on their own Bible that the writer of Gal. 3 verse 10 has again completely misunderstood the Jewish Scriptures and tragically misused the verse of Deut. 27:26 in such a way as to negate the whole of the Law as if failing to obey it "all" is a curse upon anyone who tries to live his life dedicated to the Word and Laws of God. Again it must be said that Laws are little more than Covenant responsibilities that one has been given by God to assure one' right-standing before God. Such right-standing before God is assured by one's attempted obedience to these Covenant stipulations and Laws and when one fails this same God has given remedy to restore such a broken relationship. This is not hard and one must have only the desire to try to live a life obedient before God. But again the writer of Gal. 3:10 uses the verse to scare all readers everywhere that failure to uphold and perform "all" of the Law brings a curse upon him when in reality such an attempt brings the blessings of God. Besides there are parts of the Law that apply only to men, to women, and to priests. There is no way a person can "obey" all the Law and Jesus was not an exception. He believed in it "all" as other Jewish commentators have related as the real meaning of the verse in it's Hebraic context. Jesus knew and believed that all of the Torah was from God and relevant to all facets of life. It is we who are Christians who have been opposite and hold contrary beliefs concerning the Law that in reality are sinful and bring the curse that we are assured we won't get. I would hate to die as a "Law/Torah" rejecting Christian and meet God and find out what curse awaits me because I believed the anti-Semitic pro-Pauline writer of Galatians 3:20 over Moses, the Prophets, and Jesus. Again we encounter the purposeful mistranslation of the original verse from Deut. 27:26 and have even the addition of words to the text that are missing in the original ("all) from the pen of the writer of Gal. 3:10. This "curse" again is not for sinning but for denying the Law's validity for one's life and that it all came from God. The verse of Deut. 27:26 is completely taken out of context by the writer of

Galatians and such does irreparable damage to the original meaning of the verse and what God intended we know about His Torah.

# LOOKING AT THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR FURTHER MEANING

**The real message Paul was sending in his letters to the Corinthians and the Galatians was to separate themselves from a group which had become a serious threat to him because they were exposing his false teachings for what they were…lies based upon false pride. The Biblically illiterate Gentiles of Asia became easy pickings for Paul. It was these Gentiles who had learned about Judaism in the synagogues and felt an affinity to monotheism. Most had not accepted all the precepts of Judaism but were sympathetic to its principles. Paul found them a ready-made community to proselytize and had converted many of them to his faith. Then he discovered that many of his converts were reverting back to Judaism or Jewish practices. They and the Jewish-Christian missionaries who returned them to the fold of the Torah were called "Judaizers." The Judaizing Christians were a problem to Paul because converts remained Christians while insisting on following a Jewish style such as observing the Sabbath, celebrating Jewish festivals following dietary laws as mandated in the Torah for them. These "Judaizers" were a threat to Paul's efforts to indoctrinate his false beliefs and practices into his converts and followers. Paul expressed his greatest animosity for Judaizer, pronouncing a curse on them, when just the opposite is true for those who add to or take away from the Word of God (Deut.. 4:2). But it is only by understanding the conflict bet Paul and the Judaizers and his bitter resentment of them as competitors that we can appreciate his virulent attacks on the Torah and his use or misuse of quotations from it. The Law is the underpinning of Judaism; by condemning it and its advocates, Paul hoped to weaken both. This, then, is the background and motivation behind Paul's choice of Pentateuchal quotations. He literally took the law out of the Law and transformed it into a mockery of Moses' messages. Paul launched a battery of Biblical citations in Gal. 3. The following paragraphs contain some of Paul's quotations, their original wording in Tanakh, and comments.**

***Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do every written in the book of the law" (Gal. 3:10).***

Paul was saying in essence that once a person became a Jew and agreed to try to live according to the Law, he incurred the wrath and curses of God if he failed to uphold every statute. On the other hand, Paul inferred, if one did not take himself the obligation of living according to principles in Pentateuch, he was then free to violate them without penalty so long as he had faith. **Although Paul expressed another view later in the same letter (Gal. 5:19-21, 6:7-9), he nevertheless continued to propound the concept that the individual was not bound by any limitations provided, he professed the belief that Jesus is Christ. So often I hear Christians say that the Jew cannot be "saved" without faith in Jesus because they do not obey the law perfectly, but to one's amazement if they only knew a little about Judaism; …** There is no hint in Rabbinic literature of a view such as the Paul expressed, namely that one must achieve legal perfection through perfect obedience to the Law. This neither corresponds to general rabbinic positions nor to those of any specific branch of the Pharisees such as the Shammaites who were considered stricter than others. **"The Rabbis consistently passed up opportunities to require legal perfection." Paul's version of Dt. 27:26 is predictably different from its original source, viz "Cursed is he will not uphold the words of this Law to do theme ."** It is important to know to what the phrase, 'the words of this Law,' refers in it's original context as used in the book of Deut. 27:26. **This is the last verse in the chapter and relates to commandments of a very serious nature. Mentioned in the previous verses. There is a series of imprecations against people who commit the following immoral acts: idolatry, dishonor of parents, removal of a neighbor's landmark (theft of his land), inhumanity to the blind, injustice to the helpless (widowed, orphaned, and foreigner), incest and beastiality, murder, and bribery. Many of these offenses might never be discovered or judged in a law court. The Mosaic Law stated that God would judge the offenders and curse (punish) them for their wickedness. This, according to Torah, would be the fate of those who violated serious ethical laws, whether or not they expressed a belief in the Mosaic code.** Paul said in direct contradiction to

**the Deuteronomic phrase he cited that no one will be justified by the Law because "the righteous will live by faith." This is the same error he makes repeatedly as seen in the previous articles. We discussed this phrase from Habakkuk at the beginning of this series of articles. Of course no one will be justified by the Law or rather the Law will not justify any wanton and deliberate offender. On the contrary, the righteous Jew or Gentile will be justified by his good behavior which is his response to faith in God and His Word.. Immediately after Paul's quote in Gal. 3 of the phrase in Deuteronomy with his anti-Torah interpretation, Paul will now do something he has not do often; he quotes correctly an Old Testament passage from Leviticus coupled with an explanation consistent with its meaning. He stated that the Law is not based on faith and illustrated this with Lev. 18:5: You shall keep My statutes and ordinances and the man who does so shall live by them." It is a sad shame that he vacillates between these positions in his writings, and even sadder that the Christian Church as so ill-prepared their flocks that in reading the Bible they overlook such errors.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you now beginning to see the importance of studying your Hebrew Roots?**

**It is time for Christians to repent when information like this comes their way. The bottom line is that we have bought lie after lie in the New Testament.**

**Answer for yourself: Where is your anger that you have been deceived when reading the New Testament as you are now becoming aware of the purposeful misrepresentation of "religious beliefs" once held by the true followers of Jesus? We are admonished not to add to or take away from the Word of God but we see it done on almost every page of the New Testament when passage after passage is purposefully mistranslated, misapplied, taken out of context, twisted to give a different meaning than the original author intended, etc.**

**Answer for yourself: When will you come to a point in your life that you can say before God "this is enough" and begin to defend God and His truth when such lies are exposed?**

**In closing the context of Deut. 27:26 and the curse is not for one breaking the Law but denying the validity and relevance of the Law for one's life. This curse ironically comes to those who adopt Paul's theological persuasion of the end of the Law. Paul is simply wrong and we have the testimony of the Jewish nation for 2000 years to this fact. It is the Jew's Law and their Torah and we need to listen to their "light" as they instruct the nations to the truths of God since Israel and not Rome is a Holy Nation and a Royal Priesthood.**

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# NO MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW IN THE SIGHT OF GOD...OR IS HE?

***Gal 3:11 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. (KJV)***

**As we begin we must recall that all of Galatians chapter 3 except for 4 verses was not existent in the first collection of the Pauline Epistles and only finds it's origin after 180 A.D. with Irenaeus' response to Marcion's first canon. But yet in this particular instance the pro-Pauline writer is only continuing the thought process of Paul where we find in Romans where he likewise says:**

***Rom 3:28 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. (KJV)***

**But now we enter a problem when we look at another of Paul's verses in Rom. 2::13:**

***Rom 2:13 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (KJV)***

**If you are not confused yet you ought to be. This is just one example of many where the New Testament contradicts itself over "theological doctrines."**

**Answer for yourself: We grow up in our Christian churches being taugth Gal. 3:28 and Rom. 2:13 but why don't we hear sermons preached on Rom. 2:13 where Paul, or someone, also said that "the doers of the Law shall be justified?"**

**If you have been a diligent student up to this point in your study of this website you have seen that much of the New Testament and the Pauline epistles are continually being written almost 200 years after Paul died. This should make you wonder what Paul really taugth or if many of his teaching have been altered to read completely opposite of what he "historically believed" by the Gentile Christians who would come later and have control of the manuscripts that would later become the New Testament. It surely does me! The advantage that I have over the usual reader is that I have invested almost twenty years into problems like this to arrive as best as possible to the honest answers for these difficult issues.**

**Answer for yourself: What is Judaism's stance upon "faith," "belief," and "justification?"**

**Since Jesus was a Jew and practiced Judaism then if we are to, as Phil 2:5 instructs ("Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," then it is important to understand not what Paul has written in the New Testament but what Biblical Judaism teaches about "faith" and "belief" as these are the thorny issues involved in the New Testament as "faith alone" is constantly pitted against "faith and resultant obedience to the Law" as the method of obtaining right-standing before God. So let us examine what Biblical Judaism teaches about "faith" and see if Paul, himself a confessed 'Pharisee of Pharisees," agrees with his own faith and try to**

**ascertain if not then why not.**

# FAITH-BELIEF (EMMUNAH) FROM A JEWISH POINT OF VIEW

**Since most Christians are familiar with what Paul taught about "faith alone" it would be profitable to understand what Jesus the "proto-typical" Jew believed in his own faith about "belief and faith."**

**In the Jewish Bible there are no articles of faith or dogmas in the Christian or Islamic sense of the terms. Although trust in God is regarded as a paramount religious virtue (Gen. 15:6; Isa. 7:9; cf. Job 2:9), there is nowhere in Scripture an injunction to believe. Even a verse like II Chronicles 20:20 "believe (haaminu) in the Lord your God, and you will be established; believe His prophets, and you will succeed" expresses only King Jehoshaphat's advice to the people; : "BELIEF" is not a religious commandment. Furthermore, the verb heemin (Nymah "to believe"), the noun emunah ("belief"), and other forms derived from the stem "mn" (Nma) mean to trust, have confidence; and faithfulness; and in this sense are used both of God and of man (Gen. 15:6; Deut. 32:4; Prov. 20:6; Job 4:18). This usage is in striking contrast to the concept of "belief" in the New Testament (e.g., John 3:18). It is only in the Middle Ages, when Jewish theologians began to formulate articles of faith, that derivations of the root "mn" came to be used in a dogmatic sense. The reason for the absence of a catechism in both the Bible and the rabbinic tradition is probably twofold: in Judaism the primary emphasis is not on profession of faith but on conduct as a response to the Law and Commandments of God (Avot 1:17); and speculative and systematic thinking is not characteristic of the biblical or the rabbinic genius. Dogmatics entered Judaism as a result of external pressure; contact with alien religious systems, which had formulated theological doctrines, compelled Jewish thinkers to state the basic creeds of their own faith. In a sense, Jewish dogmatics forms part of the larger category of Jewish apologetics.**

**No religion, however, is conceivable without fundamental doctrines or axiomatic principles, and Judaism, in its scriptural as well as rabbinic aspects, is no exception. Indeed, the Bible contains certain summary statements that might be considered incipient dogmas. The Shema (Deut. 6:4), underscoring the unity of God; the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1 ff.; Deut. 5:6 ff.), providing an epitome of Jewish precepts; the formulation of the divine attributes in Exodus 34:6–7; Micah's sublime summary of human duty (6:18); and the majestic simplicity of the Lord's assurance to Habakkuk "but the righteous shall live by his faith" (2:4) are a few examples culled from many. But valuable as these formulations are, they do not embrace the complete range of fundamental biblical teachings. Only an analysis of scriptural doctrines against the background of the entire complex of biblical thought can yield the essential religious beliefs, moral ideals, and spiritual truths that underlie the faith expounded by the Scriptures.**

**According to the Encyclopedia of Judaism acceptance of a concept that cannot be proved beyond all doubt by human reasoning is the meaning of "faith." The Hebrew words "emunah" and "bittahon" refer to different aspects of faith: emunah is the traditional meaning of "faith" while bittahon is "trust or faithfulness." The biblical use of the former means "faith in," which is the effective attitude of trust in God and confidence in the fulfillment of His promises. In the ancient sources, use of emunah does not signify belief that God exists, which was taken for granted. The term `emunah' is found in the Bible in various contexts whose basic meaning is "to be firm": "They had faith in the Lord and in Moses, His servant" (Ex. 14:31) or "The righteous shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2.4).**

**Faith in God as "trust" is important in biblical religion since so much of man's encounter with God has to do with promises which are to be fulfilled in the distant future. Thus landless and barren patriarchs are asked to envision their eventually developing into a numerous people, with a land of their own. With each of the biblical generations, the word of God is mainly directed toward the future. Therefore, in the formative period, the vital "faith" element is not so much whether God appeared at some point in the past or even whether He exists somewhere at the present time, but rather, "can we rely upon His promises for the future?" and this requires**

**"trust," an abiding confidence in the essential goodness, steadfastness, and consistency of the Creator and Promisor.**

**Nowhere does the Bible speak unequivocally of the importance of "faith" in the cognitive sense of "belief that" something is the case, namely, that God exists. This is not because these cognitive beliefs played no role in Judaism. On the contrary, "belief in..." presupposes "belief that..." God cannot be trusted in if His existence is denied. "Belief that..." is not stressed in the Bible in connection with God because it was taken for granted. The sense of the presence of God as a living, palpable reality was strongly self- evident. But you should see that "faith" in the Jewish sense is "God-centered" and not "man-centered" or "Messiah-centered" as found in Paul's premise.**

**The prophets inveighed against those who, while acknowledging the existence of God, denied that He is aware of human affairs (Ps. 94:7) or that He governs justly (Ezek. 18:23; Mal. 2:17, 3:14). Most important for them is the question of the kind of God believed in and its implications. Belief that the Lord your God "took you out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 20:2), means that He intervenes in human affairs. "The Lord our God is One" (Deut. 6:4) implies that idolatry and polytheism are lies without power. Here, in the view of the rabbis, "He who denies idolatry is as if he acknowledged the entire Torah" (Sif., Deut. 28). Rather than emphasize the importance of "belief" as such or the saving power of dogma as Christianity and Paul has taught, the rabbis stressed the disastrous consequences of denying the basic beliefs. They spoke of the kofer be-ikkar ("he who denies the roots," i.e., belief in the one God) and ruled in the Mishnah (San. 11:1): "These are the ones who are excluded from the World to Come: He who denies the Resurrection, that there is no Torah from Heaven [denies Divine Revelation which I showed you refers to the misquote of Gal. 3:10 in a previous article ], and the epikoros... (who denies belief in Providence and reward and punishment;). Furthermore, the rabbis frequently traced specific transgressions to a lack of faith on the part of the sinner (e.g., San. 38b). The entire structure of beliefs and practices called Judaism rests upon certain cognitive presuppositions, in the absence of which the entire structure collapses. However, absent from Judaism is the concept of catechism, that there is some special spiritual efficacy in the act of affirming the belief itself which is the whole of the cornerstone of the New Testament and Paul's message. This is truly amazing since Paul passes himself off as a "Pharisee of Pharisees." He was the strangest Pharisee that ever lived them since his concept of faith is completely contrary to "faith" as believed by everyother Pharisee that ever lived!**

**So we again find ourselves with Paul's idea as expressed in Gal. 3:11:**

***(Rom. 3:20) Clearly no one is justified before God by the law... (Gal. 3:11)***

**Paul would later go on to write the same in his book of Romans:**

***Therefore no one will he declared righteous in his (God's) sight by observing the law.***

**Paul's claim that the Torah could not bring righteousness is a contradiction of the message of the entire Hebrew Bible, which, it will be recalled is considered sacred in Christianity. Throughout the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible consisting of the Law, Prophets, and Writings) the Israelites were assured repeatedly that righteousness would result from observing the Laws and Commandments of God (the Torah).**

**Deuteronomy 6:25 attests to this guarantee:**

***And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.***

**Similar thoughts are found in other Biblical books such as in I Kings 2:3 in which David imparted his last advice and charge to his son, Solomon, before he died:**

***Keep the charge of the Lord your God to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, commandments, ordinances, and testimonies, as written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.***

**One only needs be familiar with the whole of the Jewish Scriptures in order to see that Paul's false premise that the Torah cannot bring "righteousness" and "salvation" is blatantly false:**

*Ezek 33:14-15 14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; 15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. (KJV)*

*Ezek 3:21 21 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul. (KJV)*

*Job 8:6 6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. (KJV)*

*Prov 16:31 31 The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. (KJV)*

*Dan 4:27 27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. (KJV)*

**As if that above is not enough to prove Paul's premise wrong we encounter again within the Pauline writings continual conflict of theological ideas where Paul contradicts himself:**

***Rom 2:26 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? (KJV)***

**So we are left with a severe problem. We have the testimony of Paul that goes counter to all that Moses, David, the Prophets and even Jesus taught.**

***Gal 2:21 21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (KJV)***

**For Paul, a presumed "Pharisee or Pharisees" we have a severe problem indeed how he can espouse and teach doctrines so contrary to the very spirit and revelation given all of Israel at Sinai and as a New Testament believer you do as well. As shown in this article the teachings of Genesis through Malachi teach one thing very clearly; that contrary to Gal. 2:21 where Paul implies that "righteousness" comes not by the law, the fact of the matter of the Jewish Scriptures is that "right-standing" before God and "righteousness" has always come from obedience to the Law and will always be the manner by which man can make himself "acceptable" to God. If you have the ability to balance the whole of the teachings concerning "righteousness" in the Jewish Old Testament against Paul's concept of "righteousness apart from the Law" then you must surely question the attached teachings of Paul's interpretation of Jesus' death. Shalom.**

# RIGHTEOUSNESS...FROM A JEWISH VIEW

**Before we conclude this article we have seen "faith" from a Jewish perspective and now it is time to examine the Jewish concept of "righteousness."**

**Righteousness from a Jewish view means the value of justice and right; hence, a good action. The usual Hebrew words tsedakah or tsedek have the connotation of legal justice, as in the biblical texts "Justice, justice, shall you pursue" (Deut. 16:20) and "Just balances, just weights" (Lev. 29:36), the latter in the context of righteousness in the market place. In its ultimate ideal, the aspect of righteousness as justice is ascribed to God as in "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, righteous and right is He" (Deut. 32:4) and "The Lord is righteous in all His ways" (Ps. 145:7). In addition to having legal implications, righteousness implies loyalty to moral teachings that affect the conduct of mankind. Already Noah was described as "a man, righteous and wholehearted" (Gen. 6:9) but it is the prophets who particularly developed the ethical aspects of righteousness. To Amos, these are more acceptable than mere legalism (2:6; 5:12,23). Moreover, social righteousness must be complemented by inner repentance. "Total" human righteousness is regarded by the author of Ecclesiastes as unattainable: "For there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and does not sin" (7:20), but this may be no more than a counsel of moderation in the spirit of his advice "Be not righteous overmuch" (7:16). However, the later books of the Bible see the perfect world as one of "righteousness," while the Dead Sea Sect saw their guide and model as the "Teacher of Righteousness." In rabbinic ethics, as well as among the medieval moralists, the quality of righteousness is even more than conformity to legal and moral norms. It is also a state of deeper piety expressed in a character of deep spirituality, illustrated in acts of true charity. Indeed, the word tsedakah is now used especially for charity. Especial esteem attaches to the Tsaddik, the righteous man; the term becomes a title for a pious or saintly man, later to have a unique application in Hasidism. The world is sustained by the 36 Tsaddikim while the Talmud glorifies the tsaddik as the ideal type of man to which all must aspire. But in all we just read "righteousness" in not ascribed to man because of "what he believes" as Paul would later teach; but rather, "righteousness is what you DO because of what you believe." This is the fundamental difference between Judaism and what Jesus the Jew believed and what Paul taugth that can be linked to whatever happened to him on the Damascus road that caused him to stray from Biblical faith.**

***And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.***

**Paul is simply wrong!**

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# HABAKKUK. 2:4..."THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH" AND THE MISUSE OF THE TEXT IN GALATIANS 3:11

**With this article, having laid a proper foundation and alerted the read what to look for as we examine specific texts and how they have been misused and misapplied in the various places in the New Testament, let us continue our quest for truth in earnest. We will at this time begin to examine point by point doctrines as taught in the Jewish Old Testament and then compare them with teachings on the same topic from the New Testament, especially from the writings attributed to Paul. Let us look for similarity, assurance of truth by the witness of Scripture confirming previous Scripture, or replacement doctrines in the New Testament by blatant contradiction of the Old Testament by the writings attributed to Paul in the New Testament.**

**Answer for yourself: As we proceed I would ask you to keep this simple question in mind: Can the writings of Paul be true if they contradict Moses, the Prophets, or Jesus?**

## FAITH VERSUS TORAH...WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

**One of Paul's fundamental doctrines is the importance of faith The term he used in Greek is *pistis,* which means trust or belief and refers to the indispensable need to trust in God's word. Paul alluded to his precept repeatedly throughout his writings. Like a man with an obsession he saw examples of his belief wherever he looked. Virtually every book in the Hebrew Bible supplied Paul with passages which, which, according to Paul, could be cited as illustrations that faith (or trust) had replaced and was better than deeds (obedience). Many of the topics in these forthcoming articles, therefore, deal with those Biblical verses cited by Paul as proof of his dogma. After reading them, and comparing Paul's ideas with the original verses taken in context, I only ask that "you" be the judge to what I will show you.**

**In his Epistle to the Romans, which is the most elaborate development and presentation of his doctrine, Paul endeavored to establish the significance of "faith" in the new religion he was preaching. He offered numerous passages from Hebrew Scriptures as proof of his thesis that faith or trust was more important than deeds and that belief in Jesus as messiah (or Christ Jesus, as he expressed it) had superseded the Torah.**

**Answer for yourself: Does God desire that you believe that "faith has superseded the Torah" as Paul maintained?**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul correct; has belief "in" Jesus replaced the Torah and obedience to commandments of God for eternal life and salvation? Or is Paul wrong?**

**Answer for yourself: And if Paul can be proven wrong, what does that say about the average believer today who "believes in Jesus" but has led a life as a Gentile Christian not concerned about the numerous commandments, therefore living without the knowledge of required obedience to the Torah?**

**Answer for yourself: Does it not stand to reason that such a one is ignorant of many, breaks many, or neglects many, because of the improper teaching he has inherited? Remember that there are 613 of them.**

## PAUL MISUNDERSTANDS HABAKKUH…HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE IF HE STUDIED UNDER GAMILEAL?

**According to Paul and his gospel, faith (or trust) had replaced and was better than deeds (obedience). Paul began his reasoning by quoting in Rom. 1:17 a beautiful sentence from Habakkuk, popularly translated as, "The righteous shall live by faith." He uniquely and predictably invested this statement with the meaning that people must have faith in "his gospel"…Paul's gospel…. which will then bring them salvation. This is a total perversion of the context of which Habakkuh spoke. Faith in God as the only Savior was replaced by Paul by "faith in Jesus". This is not the same to say the least and definitely not in the heart of Habakkuk when he penned this verse.**

**Answer for yourself: How much influence has Paul's doctrine of "faith in Jesus", "faith in Jesus being the Messiah of Israel", and "faith in the death, burial, and resurrection" of Jesus done harm to the believer in God in contributing to his misunderstanding of his responsibility to have faith in God only and to obey God's commandments thereby making his life more pleasing to God? It is incalculateable.**

**Let me give you one example. I dare say that few have broken the commandment: "Thou shall not kill (premeditate murder). However, the vast majority in Christian churches today are guilty of violating the commandment unaware, for the commandment equates failure to feed and clothe the poor with "murder." This is something few of you have heard in your churches because we focus on "faith in Christ" instead of learning to study the commandments and their nuances and thereby make sure you "live like Christ".**

**What we lack in Christianity today is the basic knowledge that "faith" responded in "obedient actions," and the absence of such action is not faith.**

**Answer for yourself: If such "obedient actions" are lacking in our lives, regardless if we believe "in Jesus," can we be pleasing to God? We can have faith "in Christ" all we want, but if we live lived totally ignorant or and disobedient to the Laws of God we sin. Ignorance of the Law is perpetuated by the Pauline doctrine…."all we have to do is believe in Christ." This is a cosmic error the proportions of which cannot be fathomed.**

***Let us remember that Paul, in developing his doctrine of "faith" is quoting the Prophet Habakkuk in Romans 1:17 and that his reference to "faith" in Romans MUST carry the same idea as expressed by the Prophet Habakkuh.***

**There a laws to language and the use of language. When quoting another source, in order to arrive at the original meaning and be true to the text it is necessary to retain the same context as the original writer. If we use the original writer and his language in another way entirely different from what he intended, understand that this is not a "quote" but a completely new idea by the second writer. Paul gave a lot of "new" ideas in the New Testament but used enough Old Testament verbiage to make it sound like he had the authority of the Old Testament Prophets and Moses in doing so. Such could not be further from the truth.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the thrust of the message of Habakkuk when he said "the just shall live by faith" and did Paul represent it accurately or inaccurately in the New Testament?**

## THE MESSAGE OF HABAKKUK

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 1:17, when quoting Habakkuk, carry the same meaning that Habakkuk intended his readers to have? Remember if not, then Paul is leading us astray by quoting a Prophet**

**yet distorting his message. Let us investigate and you make up your own mind.**

**The name Habakkuk may come from a Hebrew name that means "to embrace." In his book, he comes to grips with serious problems and lays hold of God by faith when everything in his life seems to be falling apart. His love for and obedience to God is not dictated by his surroundings or his environment. Regardless of the situation one may find himself in, much of which is temporary, the important thing that Habakkuk stresses is that one maintain their faith in God regardless of your situation…good or bad.**

**More precise and to the point, Habakkuk saw the impending Babylonian Invasion, and he wondered why God would use a wicked nation to punish His chosen people. The key text is 2:4, "But the just shall live by his faith" and is quoted in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrew 10:38. The theme of Romans is "the just" and how to be just before God.**

**Habakkuk saw the wickedness of God's people in Judah and prayed for God to work repentance though His people, but the Lord didn't seem to hear. The prophet longed to bring revival to the land, but his prayer went unanswered, or so he though. God told His servant that his prayers would be answered in a way he never expected, for God was going to bring Babylon against Judah and chasten people for their lack of faithfulness and steadfastness to obey His Word. From the human point of view, the invasion of the land and the captivity of the people would seem a tragedy, but it was God's work just the same. Notice if you will the issue is faithfulness to continue to love God and obey the commandments regardless of impending invasion. In other words, don't give up on God. But be not mistaken, obedience to the commands of God as a consequence of faith is the subject of Habakkuk and not isolated faith in a dogma or doctrine isolated from obedience.**

**Yet God is faithful. Habakkuk was reassured that God's people can trust Him because His character never changes and His Word never fails. It may not seem that way now, but one day His glory will be revealed in all the earth. Meanwhile, God said He was at work so the prophet asked Him to keep on working but to be merciful to His people. Habakkuk reviewed God's work in the past and recalled His greatness and power. In every era of history, God was there to work for His people; He would not fail them now and His people should no longer fail Him as well and would once again become obedient to Him. The Babylonian invasion and captivity would be painful experiences, but God would use it for His glory and the good of His people. Being reassured of God's faithfulness to His people in spite of the consequences and situations they find themselves in, then His people are to be renewed in their faithfulness to Him and to obedience to His word.**

**Having understood the background for the passage "the just shall live by his faith" let us continue to contrast what God intended we know and what we have come to know through the preaching of Paul.**

# NOW CONTRAST THAT IDEA WITH WHAT PAUL SAID

**Answer for yourself: To what kind of "faith" did Habakkuk refer: faith in and recognition to an abstract fact, or faithfulness to God's Word exampled through their obedience?**

Paul began his reasoning by quoting in Rom. 1:17 a beautiful sentence from Habakkuk, popularly translated as, "The righteous shall live by faith." Paul gives this passage from Habakkuk a completely different meaning than what the Prophet intended. Paul predictably invested this statement with the meaning that people must have faith in the gospel which Paul himself taught which was, as Paul not taught, was the only teaching which will will then bring them salvation.

**The Hebrew word, emunato, which is referred to in Habakkuk, is more accurately translated as "his faithfulness" or "his steadfastness." The phrase in Habakkuk 2:4 is better rendered, "The righteous shall live by his faithfulness."**

**The phrase in Habakkuk 2:4 is better rendered, "The righteous shall live by *his faithfulness."* This gives the sentence a completely different meaning. The idea conveyed here and in other passages in the Hebrew Bible where the term is used is that the person who remains steady and constant in observing his moral principles will eventually be vindicated, although he suffers in the interim. This was no call for abstract trust in an idea or person but rather for constancy in ethical behavior. That meant remaining loyal to Torah teachings. Habakkuk's message was very different from the one for which Paul was using it.**

**Answer for yourself: When quoting a previous Scripture, do we do injustice to the quote from the original meaning if we apply it different way without advising our readers we have done so? We sure do. Dear child of God, this is exactly what Paul did!**

***Understanding the original meaning of the Hebrew word and the prophet Habakkuk's intention from the historical context of the passage, gives Paul's statement in Romans a completely different meaning than what we have been led to believe by others who failed to study thoroughly.***

**The original idea conveyed in Habakkuk and in other passages in the Hebrew Bible where the same term is used is that the person who remains steady and constant *in observing Biblical moral principles of the Bible* (which come from the teachings of the Law) will eventually be vindicated, although he suffers in the interim. Since your church most likely does not read from and study the book of Habakkuk, I suggest you read it for yourself and understand the message of the book for yourself, for without such an understanding, you interpretation of what Paul is saying can be faulty and you are likely to believe untruths represented to you as "truths."**

***The concept of "justification before God" and the role of "faith" within justification has absolutely no connection to abstract trust in an idea or person or another's actions (Jesus'. It has no connection in what you believe about another and their identity (whether Jesus is Messiah or died for your sins according to Paul)), but rather for constancy and steadfastness in one's own personal ethical behavior in response to the commandments of God.***

**Answer for yourself: Do you now see that the faith of which Habakkuh was speaking of was not a "faith" directed in something apart from oneself (another, or his identity or accomplishments or a belief in a Messiah or his death), but rather a faithfulness in yourself to live obediently to God apart from your circumstances?**

**Answer for yourself: That is rather hard don't you think when you have been told your whole life that "your are under grace and not under the Law"?**

***Remaining loyal to Torah teachings and commandments is what God intended we demonstrate before Him in spite of our situation, and not a belief in Christ that is devoid of obedience or gives license and freedom from such commanded obedience to the law.***

**This is just one of Paul's perversions in the New Testament, and I have been warning you for months.**

**The tragic irony of the whole matter is this: It is in such demonstration of obedience to God and his commandments, regardless of our situations and circumstances, which reveal our "faithfulness" and "steadfastness" to Him, which ensures our "justification before God." Nowhere in such an idea is room for a "mental assent to a doctrine" [identity of a man as Messiah or what his death accomplished], but rather it points repeatedly to ethical conduct and behavior based upon God's standards.**

**Let me give you an example quickly. Today's Christians give their tithe to their church which uses the funds as they see fit. But if you have understood what I have been saying, then the commandments of the Torah regarding the Tithe is still in force today. That means if you contribute to such an institution, and the funds are used in other ways than what God has commanded, in reality you are violating the commandment and sinning. This is only the tip of the iceburg.**

## *Habakkuk's message was very different from the one which Paul was preaching.*

**Answer for yourself: Now please be honest with yourself….which idea have you inherited in reading the New Testament and listening to your preachers…..obedience to the commandments of God for justification…… or faith in the identity and mission of Jesus for justification?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that Paul has used the passage from Habakkuk in such a way to give authority to what he wants to say which is diametrically opposite to what the original author intended?**

**The original intent of the Habakkuk is obscured in Paul's writings, but Paul's builds momentum for his doctrines by taking out of context and misquoting the Hebrew Scriptures, and who would notice? The Gentiles to which Paul went were not Old Testament scholars but rather heathens, and would not notice a verse taken out of context from its original source and twisted in such a way to bring a new meaning that destroys the original author's intention. Justification through repentance and obedience to God and His commandments, regardless of one's situation, for Paul, became justification in belief in Paul's idea of Yeshua's identity, accomplishments, and his function.**

**You now be the judge.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul honest in his portray of that verse in Romans?**

**Answer for yourself: Are there other instances were Paul distorts the original meaning of the Prophets? You bet….stay tuned.**

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# GAL. 3:13...HOW COULD PAUL BE SO WRONG IN TEACHING THAT THE HANGING OF A CORPSE ON A TREE IS A CURSE UPON THE "DEAD" INSTEAD OF THE "LIVING"?

**It never ceases to amaze me. Paul, a touted "Pharisee of Pharisees," and he butchered the Jewish Scriptures and takes them so much out of context and gets them so backwards that I wonder if he could be Jewish at all. Well I have found my answer to that on both fronts:**

- **First, the Ebionites left records describing Paul as a Gentile convert who later turned against Judaism**
- **Second, when Marcion, a pro-Pauline disciple, collected the first New Testament writings which consisted of ten of Paul's epistles, the Galatians in the first New Testament was missing all of chapter 3 but 4 verses. If these "pro-Pauline" verses had existed then an anti-Semitic Gnostic like Marcion would have jumped at the chance to use them. Their absence from the first New Testament and Paul's earliest Galatians reveals to the objective reader that these passages were added later by some Pauline disciple and today we attribute them to Paul and believe that they were from God no less.**

**We ended the last articles on Paul's misuse of the Hebrew Scripture with something unusual….an example where Paul quoted something correctly! I wish I could continue to build up Paul, but such is not the case. From this momentary lapse into accuracy Paul quickly returned to deception with his exegesis of a sentence in Deuteronomy which he mistranslated in order to try to prove his theory about the *meaning* of Yeshua's death. In Gal. 3:13 Paul claimed…Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'" (Dt. 21:23). As indicated Paul again quotes from Deut. 21:23.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul again take the above quote from Deuteronomy and misapply it to a totally different situation whereby we are led to a conclusion that does not exist in the original context or the original quote? Take a guess?**

**The quote from Paul from Deut. becomes much more understandable when it is correctly rendered and is read within the entire original context along with the verses before and after it. Paul is, as many unlearned and unstudied Christian pastors are today, guilty of taking a Scripture out of its original context and giving it a completely different meaning than what God intended without telling the listeners that what they are saying is an allegory. Too often we take things we hear to be literalisms when they are not to be such.**

**Here is Dt. 21:22-24:**

**If a man *committed a sin worthy of death* and is *put to death* and you *hang him on a tree*, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, *for he that is hanged is a reproach to God;* and *do not* *defile the land* which the Lord your God gave you for an inheritance.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you believe that Yeshua sinned, and if so, do you know where in the record of his life in**

**the New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: Then if Yeshua was without sin, how can his innocent and undeserving death, since he never incurred the wages of sin which was death, ever warrant he be cursed in the first place?**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul guilty again of taking a Scripture our of its original context and forcing a new and foreign meaning to it by misquoting it and misleading his Gentile readers who were, for the most part, not familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures?**

**Answer for yourself: Could this be one reason why the Jews, who were well versed in their Bibles and the correct interpretation there of, reject again Paul's new ideas surrounding the death of Yeshua?**

**Answer for yourself: Could miss-application of this passage from Deuteronomy cause Jews to reject Paul's new teachings on atonement which is also seen in his doctrine of "faith alone" without "works" for atonement which the whole of the Bible from Genesis through Malachi teaches?**

**Answer for yourself: Understanding that Paul is teaching against the Torah by substituting a new form of atonement foreign to the Hebrew Bible upon which the "church was to be founded," [Apostles and Prophets and not Paul], can you begin to see how Paul's teachings were in reality ironically "another gospel?"**

**Answer for yourself: Having proved beyond a doubt so far in just these 3 previous articles that Paul miss-used Hebrew Scripture for his personal agenda, can you now see why he had to resort to threats as he does in Galatians where he warns his readers that if they don't accept his "new and different" teaching they will themselves be cursed?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see why he would teach the unsuspecting Gentiles that any other message than his "new revelation" straight from Yeshua, (or so we are told to believe), was to be considered "another gospel," and who wants "another" anything when you can have the original?**

**Now for the hardest question I can ask fellow Christians.**

**Answer for yourself: If, by any chance, we have been misled, accidentally or unknowingly, to misunderstand atonement and forgiveness of sin and its relationship to the death of Yeshua, would you not want to know the real truth from rightly interpreting the whole of the Bible and not just by reading Paul's miss-quotations before you die and meet Yeshua and the Father face-to-face on Yom Kippur? Because I answered the above question affirmatively, I propelled myself to further study to make sure I truly understood what the Rabbi from Galilee really said. In doing so I found that much had been added to the New Testament and changed as successive church councils met over the early centuries. The doctrines of the Gentile Christian Church literally were in a state of flux, ever changing and being altered by the latest doctrinal creations. New meanings were derived foreign to the original meanings of the Scriptures which do great harm to what God intended we understand, but without a Hebraic perspective we have little chance of arriving at the original meanings of the text. That means if we try to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures by taking them out of their Jewish context and try to interpret them with the mind-set of Rome or Constantinople, then we can be assured we will not arrive at the correct meanings for such things as atonement, repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sin, faith, works, etc. In summary, unless we have a Hebraic perspective upon the doctrines of the Messiah of Hebrews chapter 6 for example, then your opinion is just as good as Irenaeus', Augustine's, Luther's, Calvin's, Edwards', Moody's, Sturgeon's, Graham's, etc.**

**Back on the curse and Paul's interpretation of Deuteronomy. The main point here that is overlooked by the vast majority of Christianity because they lack the Hebraic interpretation that goes with the context of the verse is that even a criminal is entitled to dignity of a decent burial. Even the criminal has a body made in the image of God and within even such a sinful wretch as a murderer and pedophile is a divine "spark" from God. Leaving his corpse hanging overnight is affront to God in whose image man was created. Contrary to what you have been told by Christian Pastors who failed to know the Hebrew behind the English of their Bibles the criminal atoned for his sin by his death and is no longer under a curse.**

**Answer for yourself: What is the last thing you and I will ever do? Die.**

**Yeshua, being a Jew, never replaced his faith with a new faith as most of have been taught to do. In the faith of Yeshua are teachings connected with atonement, and such teachings concern what a man must do and not do to atone for his own sin (sins of the Second Tablet of the Law only).**

**Answer for yourself: Do you possess all religious knowledge in the world? Then, just because you have not heard of something before does not make it wrong when you do.**

**Answer for yourself: Did your lack of understanding of algebra in High School mean it was not true when you were first introduced to it?**

**If you desire to know how atonement works in with the death of Yeshua, and understand it correctly, ask for our research papers on atonement, and learn how you can start laying away treasure in Heaven before you die, for God only knows that most of us have laid away little in thinking we have done a lot based upon what we have been taught so far in our lives by an anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic Contemporary Christian Church.**

**Now back to Paul.**

**Answer for yourself: If a sinner is cursed to be killed in such an undignified manner whereby he shames the body he was given by God and desecrated the Temple of the Spirit of God that energized his life, how much less so is an innocent victim like Yeshua (or any of his fellow Jews) who was unjustly crucified? This is the original interpretation from which Paul will make a far-reaching assumption that Yeshua carries all the curses of mankind upon his back.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever read Genesis carefully and seen what was really cursed in the events surrounding Adam and Eve and the eating of the forbidden fruit?**

**Gen 3:14-17**

- **14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:**
- **15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**
- **16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.**
- **17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; (KJV)**

**Gen 8:21**

- **21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. (KJV)**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see anywhere in these passages where man was "cursed" or "carries a curse" because he sinned?**

**Answer for yourself: "Exegesis" is where we draw out of the text what is said and "Eisegesis" is were we read into the text what we thing and concern not ourselves with what the text really says. Do you think Paul used "Exegesis" or "Eisegesis" in quoting Genesis in Galatians now that I have caused you to think about it?**

**Answer for yourself: Having already seen that Paul miss-quotes the verse in Deuteronomy about why a man is cursed and applied it incorrectly to Yeshua, then don't you think that you should concern yourself immediately about the issues of atonement and forgiveness as taught by the Bible and not by men who quote Paul who misquoted the Hebraic Scriptures? The "curse" was upon the land and this affected the "living" for desecrating the body and the image of God by allowing it to remain upon the cross for longer than God commanded; the curse was upon the living by means of the land being cursed and not the "dead."**

**We have a real problem following Paul's thoughts if we try to parallel them to the Torah and Moses. Paul's perception of the Law turned this verse from Deuteronomy into a monstrous travesty. To accept his view of Torah is to conceive of the Lord Who gave it as unfair, capricious, and unintelligent. By contrast, Jews do not perceive of the Source of their Law as displaying such gross injustice as to call down curses on "everyone who is hanged" regardless of reasons.**

**Answer for yourself: How could the innocent incur such a curse?**

**Now for a real eye-opener. Any disapproval, regarding the hanged body, attached to the living, for allowing the corpse to remain overnight on the tree, cross, or gallows. Paul's thesis is that Yeshua redeemed mankind by taking a curse on himself through hanging on the cross, but as you can now see this conclusion is without foundation in the Pentateuch from which he quoted since no curse accrued to Yeshua for being hanged on a cross as an innocent victim and since no curse was put upon man because of sin. This however, does not negate the role of Yeshua as the Lamb of God as he served in type as both lambs of Yom Kippur; one of which died for atonement for sins connected to the First Tablet of the Law and the other lamb carried the guilt of sin away (but not the consequences….[Adam had to work by the sweat of his brow, etc.].**

**Answer for yourself: This little tidbit of information regarding atonement of the First Tablet of the Law and the role Yeshua played in it should make you curious as to how atonement for the Second Tablet of the Law is obtained. Does it? Get our articles on atonement from Bet Emet.**

**But to say that Yeshua became a curse for us in that he was cursed is a complete violation of the Scriptures from which he quotes.**

**Answer for yourself: Again this is hard for you to hear, but how could a Jew, versed in the Torah since a child, who had memorized the complete Old Testament by the age of 12 make such glaring errors in quoting the Hebrew Scriptures out of context such as the one I have shown you, unless the inescapable fact confronts us to acknowledge as other scholars attest…that Paul was a Gentile who converted to Judaism as an adult, thus explaining his lack of expertise in using and quoting Hebrew Scriptures as well as both his taking them continually out of context and his lack of acceptance as an Apostle of "equal standing" by the Jerusalem church and his successes among Gentiles in Asia Minor?**

**Answer for yourself: Is not the evidence presented overwhelming?**

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# THE CHANGING OF THE TENSE OF "SEED" FROM THE PLURAL TO THE SINGULAR AND THE MISAPPLICATION OF GENESIS 13:15 & 25:7 IN GALATIANS 3:16

## THE SEMANTICS OF SEED AND SEEDS

**Paul played a game of semantics in his perversion of the use of the word 'seed' as found in Galatians 3:16. The writer of Galatians contended that when God spoke to Abraham about his "seed," God did not mean the Patriarch's descendants, but only Jesus yet it can be shown that the word from which the Galatians writer quoted is used in the plural in the verses to which he refers. But of course his Gentile readers would have not known that and the same is apparent for the vast majority of Gentile Christians today who let this passage be read over and over and never spot this mistake or challenge it. Again the Word of God has been diminished and few know enough to take such error to task. Paul leads his readers to believe that the promise given Abraham about his "seed" was to understood as the "singular;" namely Jesus. But such is plainly false. Let us examine this in more detail.**

***Gal 3:16 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. (KJV) Gal 3:16 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Does Abraham's "seed" refer to Jesus alone and as the Galatians writer again lied to his readership when saying the promise "saith NOT, And to sees, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ?**

**In Gal. 3:16 Paul said: The promises were spoken to Abraham and to seed. According to the pro-Pauline writers of Galatians (not written until 180 to 200 A.D.) the Scripture from which he quotes does not say "And to his seeds meaning many people" but "and to your seed" meaning one person who is "Christ." For Paul the use of "seed" could only refer to Jesus.**

**Answer for yourself: Is what this writer is saying in Gal. 3:16 correct and an honest interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures?**

**Paul's proof texts are Gen. 13:15 and 25:7. Let's look at what they say in their original context:**

***For all the land which you see, to you and to your seed I will give it forever.***

# *...unto your seed will I give this land. .*

**The word in Hebrew for "seed" is *"zera".* It has the same meaning and implication in the singular as in English-- progeny or posterity (carries with it the implication of plurality). Interestingly, in the plural in both English and Hebrew, the word 'seeds' refers to planting. The meaning is clear from the standpoint of the context and the definition of the word. According the the Hebrew word 'seed' was meant a multitude of people who would be Abraham's descendants and should not refer to Jesus alone, although he is included in such a designation! But to read the passage of Paul and make it exclusive of all but Jesus again does injustice to the text which must be based upon the accurate meaning of the word from the Hebrew.**

***We must never forget that regardless of what our accepted theologies about Jesus we have accepted through preaching, unless these same theologies can be substantiated by in-depth study of the Scriptures, then when proven in error, they must in the spirit of repentance and truth be rejected for the truth!***

**Although rabbinic exegesis often states that seed applied to Isaac, it was apparent that through him the lineage from Abraham would flow to many progeny who would occupy the land with which God endowed Abraham. This was spelled out in Gen. 22:17, "I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand at the seashore." So much for Paul's argument about the identity of Abraham's seed as referring to Jesus "alone."**

**So we find again that the Galatians writer has misapplied another Jewish passage for theological purposes and in so doing has destroyed the original intent of the Holy Spirit as He moved holy men of old to write the Divine revelation.**

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# GALATIANS 3:19 STATES THAT "THE LAW WAS ORDAINED BY ANGELS"....OR WAS IT?

***Gal 3:19 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (KJV)***

**The pro-Pauline author of Gal. 3:19 states that angels mediated the Law at Sinai but such a belief has no foundation in Hebrew Scriptures or Rabbinic literature. Stories in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, Midrash, and Haggadah are non-canonical and non-authoritative to Jews. They do not determine Scriptural interpretation or Jewish practice. This doctrine of angels in the New Testament was put forward to show the remoteness of the God of Israel. It is, in fact, contrary to Jewish belief (Freudmann, Antisemitism in the New Testament, p. 122). This heavy reliance upon "angels" is indicative once again of the Gnostic leanings of the writer of Galatians because the Jewish Scriptures are very explicit that the Law and the Torah was given directly by God Himself:**

Exod 20:1-19 1 **And God spake all these words**, saying, 2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. 12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 13 Thou shalt not kill. 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. 15 Thou shalt not steal. 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's. 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: **but let not God speak with us,** lest we die. (KJV)

**As you can read for yourself according to the Jewish Scriptures it was God and not "angels" which gave mankind the Torah and the writer of Galatians chapter 3 has it wrong again!**

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# GAL. 3:19 STATES THAT THE LAW WAS GIVEN BECAUSE OF TRANGRESSIONS....WAS IT #1?

***Gal 3:19 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions...***

## PAUL'S CRITICISM OF THE COVENANT GOD MADE WITH ISRAEL

It is truly tragic that non-Jews have primarily learned of God from other Gentiles and not the Jews. God did not intend that the non-Jewish world learn of Him from those who were anti-Semitic but such has happened. Because of this historical fact most of what we as non-Jews have been taught concerning God has been "skewed" to say the least since what we have been taught concerning God and Israel has been removed from it's Hebraic perspective. If you have been diligent to read and study the materials on this website dealing with the "problem of Paul" then by now you have seen for yourself ample evidence that substantiates the above statement.

**We continue our study of Paul by looking at his epistle to the Galatians and continue to examine parts of Chapter 3 which were written long after 150 A.D. by other "anti-Semites" who were pro-Pauline in nature. The replacement religion of the Gentiles under the influence of Paul continues. Let us look specifically at Gal. 3:19 and see if what is said there is truthful.**

***Gal 3:19 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (KJV)***

We as non-Jewish followers of Jesus and Christians grow up hearing this verse over and other verses like it that give the false impression that the Law, the Torah, and the Commandments of God were given because of man's sin. **If this unbalanced presentation of the Torah and the "supposed" purpose of it's giving to mankind is all you hear your whole life then it is quite understandable how you can live your whole Christian existence with "negative" impressions concerning the Law of God. As if that is not enough Christian commentators down through history have likewise been "brainwashed" but such a negative presentation of the Law and the Torah. Let me give you one example that speaks for them all. The Tyndale New Testament Commentary on The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, commenting on Gal. 3:19 on page 105, after saying "this phrase ...is not easy to interpret," goes on to say "Paul MAY mean 'to restrain fallen human nature.'" This is correct as far as it goes but the Christian commentary continues by saying that "the Law had a temporary moral nature" and that "until Christ had come, men had neither the moral incentive nor**

**the moral pattern...". They make it sound like there had never lived before Christ men who followed God and His Word. Such is purposeful and willful blindness of the highest degree and negates not only the great men of faith that their own Hebrews chapter 11 speaks but the testimony of righteous men in all the nations of the world down through history. This author of this commentary refers to Paul's own admission in Romans chapter 7 of his continual failures in living for God but in so doing reveals his total lack of understanding of Gnosticism and Paul's Gnostic confession in Romans 7. This is not Judaism and not Biblical faith and Christians read Romans 7 without knowing and discerning that in Paul's writings to Gentiles that he is departing drastically as a "Pharisee of Pharisees" from not only his supposed faith but what the Jewish Scriptures teach from Genesis to Malachi. If the Old Testament is part of your Bible then you need to see and understand that Paul is, by the time of writing Romans 7, become an apostate from Biblical faith and blasphemes the Scriptures and the Word of God and God's on Law page after page. It is your failure to have been taught correctly about the Law and the Jewish Scriptures, let alone being taught correctly concerning your Covenant with God correctly, that has hampered you and led you astray in your relationship with God and your proper understanding of God's Law and His purpose in giving it to mankind> And the most tragic thing of the whole matter is that as non-Jewish believers you don't know these things...and will not most likely learn of them until you die or somehow during life wise up to these "truths" before you meet God face to face and find out that you have believed "lies" most of your life because of the incorrect presentation of the Law by men like Paul and others.**

**This Galatians commentator makes mention that "Paul boldly says that the function of the law was not to make us holy but give us an awakened sense of sin." We as Christians and followers of Jesus have heard this our whole life. He goes on to say that "the function of the "moral sense" of the Law is to teach us our own moral bankruptcy, and the function of intellect is to teach us the intellectual bankruptcy of fallen mankind.**

**Answer for yourself: But is that all that the Law is supposed to do and is that the reason God gave the Law...to show us our sin?**

**Answer for yourself: How much do you know of Jesus the Jew and Judaism?**

**Answer for yourself: Could you spot a lie in the New Testament without proper background and understanding of what you are reading (Biblical Judaism and the Law from a Jewish perspective and not a Pauline perspective only)?**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever read or studied what the Jews like Jesus teach concerning their Law and it's purpose?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it remotely possible that as non-Jews we have been taught lies concerning the Law and Judaism and that Paul's perspective on the Law is absolutely wrong?**

**Answer for yourself: It is possible that when reading documents like Galatians chapter 3 which can be shown to have been written long after 150 A.D. by non-Jews that followed in Paul's footsteps that such writings are tainted with purposeful anti-semitic leanings and we have read them our whole lives and never knew it?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you want to meet God and find out that you have opposed Him your whole life in the name of "Jesus" no less because you have accepted without questions false teachings concerning His Law?**

**Well it is time to learn the truth concerning the Law as taught by the Jews....Jews like Jesus and not Gentiles like Paul who not only was a Gentile convert according to the Ebionites but a "bad" Jew for various reasons enumerated elsewhere on this website. History outside of the New Testament (only one book) reveals this insidious deception that we find on page after page of this New Testament. It is impossible to read the New Testament and discern "truth" from "error" without prior understanding of what we are reading that up to now has come from only "one" source...the New**

Testament's perspective. In the spirit of "truth" and "love for God" let us set at the feet of Jesus and other Rabbis as we learn of the Law given to them for the rest of the world..for you and me. Then and only then after fully understanding the Law and it's purpose can we judge if the writer of Galatians 3:19 is telling us the truth or lying to us.

# THE FOUNDATIONS OF BIBLICAL BELIEF...COVENANT AND LAW

**To arrive at the correct understanding of this topic we need to investigate several things. Jesus was a Jew and if you desire to be a true follower of Jesus then it is imperative that "you let his mind be in you" like you have been taught. That is not as easy as it sounds. The problem is magnified in the milieu of so much false teaching in Christianity today.**

**Answer for yourself: What did Jesus believe and teach about the Law?**

**Answer for yourself: What did he know and understand about the Law that you have not been taught? Do you want to know?**

**To speak of the Jew and his faith is to focus on the quintessential dimension of that faith, Torah. It is the Torah that brought solace, inner strength, and spiritual fulfillment to the Jew during times of joy, security, and prosperity, as well as during periods of wandering, suffering, and adversity. Jesus when tempted refers to the Torah for his strength...the Law. It is the Torah that guides the Jew's path, shapes his character, and links him with ultimacy. The Torah is the lens through which the Jew perceives life and reality; it is that which unites him indissolubly with his fellow Jew. The Torah is the very lifeblood of the Jewish people. But yet the Torah is not the Jew's exclusive possession because before there were Jews many of the very same Laws found in the Torah today were given to non-Jews first.**

***Gen 26:5 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (the word is Torah in the Hebrew and this is long before Sinai). (KJV)***

**The term Torah has a variety of connotations. Etymologically, it means "teachings," not "law," as it is so often mistranslated. In its broadest sense, Torah means "correct" or "properly Jewish" as in "leading a Torah way of life." More narrowly, it refers to all Jewish religious writings, including the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, responsa literature, rabbinic commentaries, et al. The term is most generally used, however, in reference to the Bible or written scriptures which Jews refer to as the Tanakh and Christians refer to as the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament. In its narrowest sense, the term Torah refers to the five books of Moses, or Pentateuch.**

The traditional view of the Torah in its narrowest sense is that it is the embodiment of God's word par excellence; the *sine qua non* of our knowledge of God and of the divine will for man. Although given to the people of Israel at Sinai at a particular juncture in history, it is, nevertheless, **eternally valid and authoritative**. Such a statement must be conditioned by the fact mentioned above that **within this Torah** reiterated and elongated upon at Sinai that is the keepsake of the Jews today are **Laws given to Noah and all non-Jewish believers in God long before Moses.** These Laws are properly understood as Covenant stipulations and requirements respective of the different Covenants God has previously made with both non-Jews and Jews. **Everything there that is to be known about life, claim the rabbis, can be derived from the Torah. "Turn it around and inside out and everything is in it." As the psalmist declared, "the Torah of God is complete; it revives the spirit" (Ps. 19:8). Without the Torah man has precious little knowledge of God and the divine intent, nor of the means by which he might be in right-standing with God.**

**Answer for yourself: How did God reveal his word through the Torah? Did he "dictate" it verbatim to Moses**

**on Sinai? Was Moses "inspired" to write it down? Was it all written by man and then sanctioned retroactively by God? These and many other explanations are offered as to how God actually communicated His will to man. In whatever way traditionalists understand the mechanics of the Sinai theophany, however, they all regard the Torah as we have it today as the primary source of our knowledge of God's word to man, and indeed, of God himself. It is, in the words of the Jewish liturgy, "given to the children of Israel from the mouth of God through the hand of Moses." Again this needs to be understood in it's correct perspective; at Sinai stood a mixed multitude of Jews and non-Jews who accepted God's Laws and Torah and such acceptance made them His "bride" and they were BOTH known as Israel. The Christian has no recognized standing outside the Israel of God and the Covenants that God made with man; a covenant of their own making as is done today is a poor substitute for those ordained by God and is not sanctioned by God since He never gave it!**

**God is not a physical being mortal man can ever come to fully know, nor can we expect to completely comprehend his immutable ways. Even Moses, the greatest of all prophets who talked with God "face to face" (Exod. 33:11) was only allowed to "see" God's "back" (Exod. 33:20, 23). (These, as well as other instances in which the Torah describes God's physical attributes, were considered by the rabbis to be anthropomorphisms, written in that manner since "the Torah speaks in language man can understand.") But if the Torah is, in a very real sense, God's word, we can come as close as humanly possible to "knowing" God himself by studying its content. The term "to know" in biblical Hebrew-ladaat-is often used in the Greek sense connoting not only cognitive and speculative knowledge, but unification and attachment as well, as in the verse, "Now Adam knew Eve his wife." This principle guided Maimonides (1135-1204), whose opening words in his magnum opus, Mishneh Torah, are, "The foundation of foundations and pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a God. . . ." it is the Torah that enables us to truly know God and to unite with Him as much as humanly possible.**

**By immersing ourselves in the sacred act of Torah study, we can come to better understand both the content and source of that divine word. For this reason Jewish education, and particularly Talmud Torah, or "study of the Torah," is one of the most important mitzvot, "religious duties," in all of Judaism. The Talmud states that good deeds such as honoring parents, acting kindly toward strangers, visiting the sick, attending the dead, devotion in prayer, and bringing peace among people are all important, but that "the study of Torah excels them all." (See B. T., Shab. 127a.) We must understand that the study of the Torah is the study of our Covenant with God! Its supreme importance lies in the fact that, in the words of the rabbis, "an ignorant person cannot be pious." Daily, the Jew links his love for God with his love for God's Torah. He prays, "With an eternal love hast thou loved thy people, the house of Israel; Torah, commandments, good deeds, and laws hast thou imparted to us. Therefore, 0 Lord our God, when we lie down and when we rise up, we will ponder thy laws and rejoice in the words of thy Torah and commandments. For they are our lives and the length of our days and upon them will we meditate day and night" (from the Jewish prayer book). The study of the Torah is the Jew's loftiest spiritual pursuit. It should be the same for Christians but sadly it is not!**

**Biblical authority, which serves as the foundation for traditional Jewish authority as a whole, is premised on the belief that the Torah was "revealed"- however one understands that term - by God. The Sinai theophany was a unique moment in human history.**

***Deut 4:32-33 32 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? 33 Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? (KJV)***

***Deut 4:6 6 Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. (KJV)***

Unlike most other faiths that are founded upon the revelatory experiences of an individual (like Paul), Judaism was born out of a divine revelation to a collective peoplehood that numbered in the millions all at one time. **For while the Torah was written by Moses, the Sinai theophany was experienced by the entire Jewish people (Exod. 20:19). There is a midrash that suggests that the whole world, including all the animals and birds, heard God speaking the Ten Commandments, and another claiming that the souls of all Jews not yet born at the time were also present then at Sinai (Deut. 5:3 upon which this idea is based).**

**The partnership of God and man as revealer-receiver of His Law and Covenants is exemplified by two verses in the Torah's account of revelation, "And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai" (Exod. 19:20) and "And Moses went up to God" (Exod. 19:2, 25). It is at the point of encounter between God and man when, in Martin Buber's terminology, the "I" meets the eternal "Thou" that genuine revelation takes place. God makes himself immanent by moving "down the mountain" and meeting man halfway.** In Christian terms, this is his act of grace. On the other hand, man, his copartner, elevates himself and spiritually goes "up the mountain" to greet the Lord. The midrash states that if man initiates even a slight movement toward God and creates an opening in his heart the size of a needle, God will respond magnanimously by enlarging it so that even chariots could pass through.

While affirming man's need for divine grace, the rabbis insisted that the initiative for this turning and reconciliation must come from man who is eminently capable of uplifting himself and initiating such a return. Man must open up his heart to God, repent of his sins, and observe the laws of the Torah. **The Hasidic expression "Where is God? Wherever we let him in" is a reflection of the Jewish conviction that man possesses the ability to initiate a movement toward God who, through His love and grace, responds a thousandfold. For Judaism maintains that man is a dignified being, created with free will and an innately pure soul.**

In contrast, the predominant Christian view is that man is shackled by his sinfulness and incapable of self-regeneration. It is God, through an act of love and grace, who initiates the movement toward man. While Judaism and Christianity indeed differ on this matter, their differences are often grossly exaggerated and very much misunderstood. Certainly, Judaism professes that it is not man's works, observance of the law, or merit **alone** that bring him closer to God, but God's love and act of grace in response to man's initiative, despite man's unworthiness, as well. **Daily, the Jew recites in his morning prayers, "Not out of our righteousness do we appeal to you, but because we rely on your mercy. What are we? What value are our lives? Our righteousness?..." And while Christianity, indeed, emphasizes God's initiative of grace in spite of man's sinfulness, it, too, regards man's deeds and works as essential.**

***"Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).***

**Clearly, while traditional Jews and conservative Christians may share much in common on the fundamental question of the divinity and inerrancy of Scripture (at least, the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible portion of it), differences abound regarding how man exegetically interprets that divine message and relates it to his life of faith. The differences become especially pronounced when we consider the question of the oral tradition.**

# LAW

**Christians at times speak of the "burden" of the law upon the Jews, particularly how it places them in bondage and blinds them to the true message of Christ and how their obedience to it petrifies and perverts both the word and will of God (Acts 15:10).** Judaism, however, understands the *love* of and "for" God as the willingness to accept upon oneself the "yoke of the kingdom of God." For when seen from within,

this yoke or burden is one that the observant Jew and non-Jew accepts willingly, out of abiding love and immeasurable joy. He regards the Torah and its laws as God's precious gift to Israel (both Jew and non-Jew), as the concrete manifestation of God's goodness and love for His people. The law purifies mankind, ennobles his spirit, and sanctifies his daily life. It gives form to his quest for moral living. Observing God's law is mankind's way of responding to the divine revelatory initiative that imparted that law. The non-Jew should feel the same way but sadly has been taught in error. Far from the negative impressions Christians have of Jewish law, often stemming from the way it was depicted and contrasted with Christian love and grace over the centuries, the observant Jew regards it as a way of life linking him with the divine, a vehicle enabling him to fulfill God's will, and a means for bringing him ever closer to the spiritual realm. Instead of bondage, the law represents true freedom. Rather than a burden, it is the Jew's greatest delight. It should be the same for non-Jews as well!

**Judaism is a spiritual and moral system rooted in law, a "covenantal nomism," as E. P. Sanders has described it. And within this "Judaism" we find an Israel of God comprised of both Jews and non-Jews in Covenant with God. As in any legal system, however, the danger exists that man might become so engrossed in obeying the detail and minutiae of the law as to lose perspective of its overall primary purpose. Similarly, he might confuse the means by which he tries to reach God with the transcendent, infinite God himself. The repeated practice of law or ritual can, admittedly, also lead to its trivialization, mechanization, and routinization. Jewish observance of the law has often been denigrated for these and other such reasons and contrasted with Christianity which, it is suggested, supplanted law with love, man's merit with God's grace, and works with faith. But even if such a condition existed it was always the "minority" and not the "majority" who lost their way.**

**Such pat dichotomies are actually by products of the historic polemic between Judaism and Christianity. In reality, there will always exist a creative tension in both traditions between man's actions and God's grace, between human merit and God's gift of love, between obedience to law and spontaneity, between righteousness through faith and righteousness through works. Indeed, the phenomenon of law is quite evident in Christianity, while that of love is most central in Judaism. Jesus, in the Book of Matthew, for example, clearly states that he did not come to abolish even one iota of the law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17- 21). And of course, Jesus' primary command to love one's neighbor as oneself (Matt. 22:37-40) was taken from the Hebrew Bible (Lev. 19:18) and reaffirmed as the quintessence of Judaism by the Talmud later on (B. T., Shab. 31a).**

Judaism maintains that the dangers inherent in an ethical legal system that concretizes and directs human emotions toward God are far less threatening than those present in a subjective, open-ended system calling for "love" but not objectifying or systematizing those human emotions into a legal framework. Only when we have defined "absolutes" understood as the highest "love" defined in conducts and behaviors that are legislated through Divine Laws as we find in the Torah and Law of God can we be certain our actions are "love" and not "selfishness" as the issues of the heart can and are only known correctly by God! Such is the great need for Law and its correct understanding and obedience by a true follower of God and Jesus.

**For this reason, the rabbis state, "Greater is he who is commanded and observes [the law] than he who is not commanded and observes." Mankind has and will continue to rationalize his actions but only when he adheres to and patterns his life around Divine Mandates and Laws can he be assured that his actions are the highest forms of "love." Additionally, while mankind is called upon to observe the law, he is also obligated to go "beyond the letter of the law" and to observe its "spirit" as well.**

Jewish halakhah, or "law," is the code of Jewish religious life applied to daily life. **It is similar to the American jurisprudence system in that both base themselves on a core constitution, supplemented by dockets of**

**legal discussion that developed through the years, which interpreted and applied the words of the basic constitution to the varying circumstances of life.**

**The midrash tells that before giving the Torah to the people of Israel, God first offered it to all of the other nations of the world who invariably asked what was contained in it. When they heard of the many laws that would be required of them should they accept the Torah, they all decided to reject it. But, when God finally offered the Torah to Israel, suggests the midrash, their response was "everything God tells us, we shall do and we shall listen" (Exod. 24:7). The rabbis note that the order should have been reversed-first one listens, then one acts. Rather, the Jewish people (both Jews and non-Jews at Sinai) loved God so dearly and trusted in Him so completely that they were willing to accept His Torah and observe its laws even before learning what that commitment entailed.**

**At Sinai the Israel had a revelatory experience wherein they encountered a commanding God who unfolded His will for man. That was itself sufficient reason to accept his word unquestioningly. Such is the Jewish love for God's word and commitment to it. Such love should be expressed by Christians as well but is not because of the New Testament and it's false depiction of the Law and Torah of God. The Torah is a tree of life, an eternal heritage to be passed on from generation to generation. It is that which gives depth and meaning to man's life (Deut. 6:1-4). The Torah is God's precious gift to Israel, both Jew and non-Jew, so that she might truly live (Deut. 5:30).**

# COVENANT

**Judaism rests upon the fundamental proposition that Israel and God are eternally linked covenantally.**

***Deut 29:10-12 10 Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, 11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: 12 That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: (KJV)***

**This *berit,* or "covenant," is an everlasting one, binding God with all future generations of Israel, as well.**

***Deut 29:14-15 14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; 15 But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day: (KJV)***

**Covenants were commonly made in the ancient Near East. They served as contracts or formal agreements between two parties, usually among kings or between a king and his subjects. The Jews transformed this concept entirely, however, by insisting that "covenants" also represented the modality of the relationship between God and his people, Israel. The specific format of covenantal agreements, such as the need for witnesses (in the biblical scheme, heaven and earth), the means by which they are sealed (e.g., the rainbow or circumcision), as well as the nature of the stipulations of the agreements themselves (e.g., if one party to the agreement acts properly then the other will reward him accordingly), remained essentially the same.**

- **The first covenant described in the Torah was that between God and Noah, entered into after the flood. As part of his agreement, God promised never again to destroy the earth, while Noah, for his part, promised to observe basic moral, or "natural," law. The rabbis deduced seven commandments from the Torah which frame this covenant, all of which are incumbent upon the sons of Noah and their future descendants-in other words, upon all humankind, always. These included the prohibitions against murder, theft, cruelty to animals, worshiping idols, blaspheming God, engaging in sundry illicit sexual relationships, as well as the positive**

command to set up a system of justice so that society would be ruled fairly (see B. T., Sanh. 57a and Gen. 9:1-9).

- The Noahite covenantal agreement is not limited to Jews (since Noah himself was not a Jew) but is universal in nature and extends to all people. It represents the moral and religious expectations Judaism has of the non-Jew. In the Jewish view, the non-Jew who abides by these seven commandments merits salvation. He need not convert to Judaism to gain a place in the eternal "world to come," the Jewish term for the afterlife. This divine-human covenantal relationship and agreement was symbolically sealed by the appearance of the rainbow (Gen. 9:12-18).

- The second covenant described in the Torah was between God and Abraham, the first Jew, in which God promised him descendants and also to make him into the father of a great nation. God, moreover, promised Abraham that he would be his God and the God of his descendants, and that He would give them the land of Canaan as an eternal possession.

*"And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:7-9).*

Abraham, as part of his agreement, promised to believe in God and to act justly and righteously before him (Gen. 17:11). In contrast with the Noahite covenant, the Abrahamic one is particularistic in nature; it applies only to Abraham and his descendants, the Jews.

- The next covenant, which is regarded by Judaism as a culmination of the Abrahamic one rather than as an entirely new one, was made between God and the entire people of Israel at Sinai. As part of their agreement, Israel promised to obey God's Torah and commandments, while God promised to bless them and reward them for their deeds.

*"See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you this day, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments. . . then. . . the Lord your God will bless you.. . . But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you this day, that you shall perish. . . . I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live" (Deut. 30:15-20).*

The symbol of the Sinaitic covenant is the Torah, which is also the repository of our knowledge of the content and stipulations of that eternal agreement made between God and Israel.

**The Abrahamic-Sinaitic covenantal agreement presumes both God's reaching out to Israel as well as Israel's acceptance of Him. For if Israel is "the chosen" people, she is also "the choosing" people in that she chose to accept God as Lord. Revelation, God's movement toward man, represents only one part of the covenantal foundation.** The act of mitzvah (i.e., Israel's commitment to obey God's commandments,) represents the human response to God's revelatory initiative and constitutes the other part to that Covenant agreement. **As the prophet Ezekiel described God's relationship with his children, Israel, "You shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Exod. 19:6). They are to be a "light to the nations" (Isa. 42:6), a source of blessing to the world (Gen. 3:2-3).**

**It is essential to point out that Jewish chosenness does not imply Jewish superiority. God has a special relationship with Israel deriving from Abraham and Sinai, but He remains the God of the universe and of all people. His covenant with the descendants of Noah remains in force:**

*"You shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine" (Exod. 19:5).*

As a result of that special relationship, however, Jews and Israel (non-Jews grafted into Israel) are also called upon to act especially ethically and responsibly. They are to serve as God's witnesses in the world through their testimony and actions which are their response to the Laws and Commandments of God in their respective Covenants. Furthermore, in the end of days this special covenant will be extended to all people (Isa. 2:1-5, 56:1-9). God is Lord of the universe, not just of Israel. He seeks out all His creatures so that they might follow Him and obey His word.

**It should also be noted that although one is born into the covenanted Jewish community, Gentiles can enter this particularistic Abrahamic-Sinaitic covenant, too, through conversion.**

**Jewish chosenness, in other words, does not imply absolute exclusivity. However, Judaism does not proselytize or seek out such conversions since Gentiles are already linked covenantally with God through the Noahite covenant. The Talmud even claims that a Gentile who acts according to the ethics of the Torah is as holy as the high priest (B.T., A.Z. 3a). Thus, a Gentile who abides by the seven Noahite commandments merits salvation and "a place in the world to come" without having to accept Judaism, while Jews are called upon to observe the laws emanating from the Abrahamic-Sinaitic covenant in order to attain that same salvation.**

While the covenant is essentially a formalized, legal agreement, the relationship between God and Israel is rooted in love and cannot be reduced to mere legalisms. God so loved Israel that he gave them His Torah, while Israel's love for God was so overwhelming they blindly agreed to follow His law. Jewish tradition often portrayed the covenantal relationship between God and Israel as analogous to the institution of marriage which, likewise, is established through vows and legalities but whose underpinnings are love and commitment. The prophet Hosea described God as saying to Israel,

*"I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord" (Hos. 2:19-20).*

*Jeremiah, too, affirmed this link of love, "Thus says the Lord. . . 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to youμ'" (Jer. 31:2-3).*

**Daily the Jew affirms in his prayers, "With an everlasting love thou hast loved the House of Israel-thou has taught us Torah, Mitzvot.. . . Blessed are thou, 0 Lord, who lovest thy people, Israel." This prayer is then immediately followed by the shema:**

*"Hear, 0 Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. . ." (i.e., Deut. 6:4-10).*

The links between God and Israel may have indeed been formalized through a covenant that demanded loyalty and commitment from the parties. They remain rooted, however, in a mutually abiding love.

**As mentioned earlier, the covenant is an eternal, everlasting pact, binding God with all future generations of Israel, too:**

*"Nor is it with you only that I make this sworn covenant, but with him who is not here with us this day as well as with him who stands here*

*with us this day before the Lord your God" (Deut. 29:14-15).*

**The rabbis deduced from this verse that the souls of all Jews who ever lived and who would ever live stood at that moment at Sinai and heard the resounding voice of God speaking to them (see B. T., Shev. 39a).**

**Preserving the generational links on the chain of Jewish tradition is one of the most powerful driving forces for Jews and a key mandate for their survival. The covenant is not a marginal aspect of the Jews' lives; it is embodied in their very flesh and being. This is symbolized by the rite of circumcision which marks their entrance into the covenant. The Jew and non-Jew renews his commitment to the covenant daily by observing God's mitzvot, and linking himself to the chain of Jewish life and tradition. He reaffirms it constantly through covenantal living. And while God's covenant with Israel can undergo strain and tension, it can never be broken. It is an eternal covenant rooted in mutual love and commitment, and remaining in effect for all times, all generations, and under all conditions. On Sinai, infinity met finitude, God encountered man, and the Divine Revealer entered into a covenant with a willing receiver, Israel. From then on they are bonded together eternally.**

# MITZVAH

***"For this commandment[mitzvah] which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. . . . But the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it" (Deut. 30:11-14).***

***"Then he [Moses] took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient'" (Exod. 24:1).***

**Israel as well as the non-Jew in the Covenant of Noah responds to God's covenantal love and imparted will through mitzvah. The Hebrew term mitzvah (plural, mitzvot) means much more than just law, commandment, or good deed. By performing an act of mitzvah the Jew and non-Jew attests to the continued vitality and force of their respective covenant as a whole on his life. Their very acceptance of the Lordship of God necessarily involves one's adherence to God's mitzvah, as well. For inherent in mankind's obligation to abide by the word of God is his duty to observe the responsibilities and commitments put forth therein respective of each's unique Covenant with God. The mitzvot are concretized and applied to everyday life situations through the system of halakhah, or Jewish law, literally meaning "the way to walk." Halakhah transforms the sublime concepts of covenant and encounter with God into daily realities by regulating virtually every aspect of both the Jew's and non-Jew's life. God has an abiding love for all His people, Israel and the non-Jew, and because of that love, He gave them Torah and mitzvot. One must not fail to realize that the Sinai Covenant was an elaboration of the prior Covenants of Noah and Abraham which involved at that time only non-Jews. Abraham might have been the father of the Jewish nation but he was a non-Jew.**

**The mitzvot sanctify the Jew's and non-Jew's life and imbue it with transcendent meaning and content. Daily the Jew prays, "For they [the mitzvot] are our lives and the length of our days and upon them we will meditate day and night." The same should be taught to and observed by the non-Jewish Christians but false teachings and the spirit of anti-Semitism from Rome has robbed the non-Jew of such a grand legacy. The mitzvot are the vehicles by which Israel and those non-Jews "grafted into it" though the Covenant of Noah (and not the Christians who are outside the Covenants of God since they practice a false and replacement religion never sanctioned or given by God) is transformed into a kingdom of priests and a holy**

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**nation; these mitzvoth are the divinely ordained tools enabling both Jews and non-Jews to emulate God's ways *(imitatio dei)* and to become holy - "You shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy." Through them we become cleansed and purified before our God. As the Jew recites in his weekly Sabbath prayers, "Our God and God of our fathers, sanctify us in thy commandments [mitzvot] and make thy Torah our portion, satisfy us with thy goodness and bring us to rejoice with thy salvation; and purify our hearts so that we might worship thee in truth. . . ." All blessings, therefore, begin with the words, "Blessed are you, 0 Lord our God, King of the universe who has sanctified us with your mitzvot and commanded us to. . ." (the specific mitzvah is mentioned). The mitzvot elevate, sanctify, and ennoble mankind. Indeed, the only reason the Torah was revealed, claim the rabbis, was "for the purpose of purifying human beings" (Gen. Rab. 44). The mitzvot shape the human character, mold his personality, and color his worldview.**

***The concept of mitzvah is not foreign to man but "is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it" (Deut. 30:14).***

**In the words of the blessing recited over the public reading of the Torah, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe who has given us his Torah which is truth and who has planted eternal life within us thereby. Blessed art thou, 0 Lord, giver of the Torah."**

**On Sinai, Israel, a mixed multitude of Jews and non-Jews, encountered a loving, commanding God who, out of His profound concern for man, revealed His will to him through His Mitzvoth and His Law. Mitzvot provide man with the opportunity to transform his every action into a means of relating with transcendence and ultimacy.**

**The concept of mitzvah flows logically from the belief in a Supreme Being who loves man and is concerned for his welfare. The mitzvot are God's blueprints of how man ought to lead his life and imbue it with divine purpose and content. They enable man to sanctify life and to advance the dawning of the *malkhut shamayim,* or "heavenly kingdom," on earth. Man, through his performance of mitzvot, can actually help bring the Messiah! The Jewish mystical tradition, in fact, claims that mitzvot even metaphysically "fix" the world and affect the spiritual composition of the universe as a whole. Man's observance of even the smallest and most trivial mitzvah-when performed with the proper intent and commitment-advances the redemption of the world.**

**The significance of the concepts of Torah, law, covenant, and mitzvah cannot be overestimated. They constitute the very building blocks of Biblical faith, the fundamentals of Biblical living. They are the means through which God imparts His will to His children, Israel (comprising both Jews and non-Jews who recognize their Covenant with God and not one of their own making that does away with them), and the ways in which Israel responds in love to His beckoning call.**

**Answer for yourself: After reading this and understanding what you read...that Law is the highest reflection of God's love for His children and man's love for his God....then do you feel now that the Galatians 3 writer was fair in his presentation of the Law as given only because of man's transgressions?**

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# GALATIANS 3:19 STATES THAT THE LAW WAS GIVEN BECAUSE OF TRANGRESSIONS....WAS IT #2?

We saw in the prior article that the pro-Pauline writer of Galatians chapter 3 stated that the Law was added because of "transgressions." Typically one approaches such a passage with the thought that the "whole" of the Law was added due to sin and never understand the real purpose of the Law and we tried to balance that perspective in the previous article in this series. Now we present a summary statement as to the purpose of the Law as taken from The Way Of God by Moseh C. Luzzatto.

**It is often beneficial to listen to what the Rabbis have to say about their Torah. Moshe Luzzatto teaches us that the Torah, understood as God's instruction by way of Laws and Commandments contain patterns and restraints which are called God's commandments. They include both positive commands and prohibitions.**

**The purpose of each commandment is either to allow man to earn and incorporate in himself a particular level of true excellence, or to remove an area of deficiency and darkness. This is accomplished through doing what the commandments require and avoiding what they forbid.**

**The nature and details of each individual commandment, however, are based on all the aspects of man's true nature and character, as well as that of the necessary perfection. Each thing then has its conditions and limits as required for man's attaining this perfection.**

**The Highest Wisdom knows all this, as well as the true nature and purpose of everything that exists. God therefore took everything into account, and included everything necessary in the commandments of the Torah. It is thus written *(Deuteronomy* 6:24),**

***"God commanded us to follow all these rules.., that He may grant us good."***

**Now the root purpose of the entire matter of religious service and worship is to have man constantly aware of his Creator. He is to realize that he was created for the sole purpose of being drawn close to his Creator, and hence he was put into this world only to overcome his Evil Urge and subjugate himself to his Creator through the power of the intellect. He must oppose his physical desire and tendencies, and direct all his activities toward attaining this goal, not deviating from it.**

**Everything that man should do can be divided into two categories. First, there is what he does as the result of a commandment. The second is what is done out of necessity.**

**The first category includes all the divine commandments. The second, on the other hand, includes all things that man does in making use of the world to satisfy his needs.**

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**The purpose of the divine commandments, contrary to what the writer of Galatians chapter 3 might think, is found in the desire of God that man should obey God's orders and fulfill His will. In doing so, he conforms to God's will in two interrelated ways.**

- **First of all, he obeys God's will in doing what he was commanded to do.**
- **Secondly, however, he also perfects himself to that certain degree associated with that particular commandment. In doing so, he is conforming to God's will all the more, since God desires that man be perfected and attain the enjoyment of God's good.**

**Man's use of the world for his own needs, however, should also be circumscribed by the limits imposed by God's will and not include anything forbidden by God. It should be motivated by the need to best maintain his health and preserve his life, and not merely to satisfy his physical urges and superfluous desires. One's motivation in maintaining his body should furthermore be so that the soul should be able to use it to serve its Creator, without being hampered by the body's weakness and incapability.**

**When man makes use of the world in this manner, this in itself becomes an act of perfection, and through it one can attain the same virtue as in keeping the other commandments. Indeed, one of the commandments requires that we keep our bodies fit so that we can serve God, and that we derive our needs from our environment to achieve this goal.**

**In this maimer, we elevate ourselves even through such activities (the fruit of obeyed commandments). The world itself is also elevated, since it is then also helping man to serve God.**

# THE ELEVATION OF MAN IN A SPIRITUAL SENSE....THROUGH THE STUDY OF THE TORAH

**One of the things that one must strengthen within himself is his love and fear of God. He should consider the unimaginable loftiness of God and the great lowliness of man, and humble himself before God, standing in awe before His greatness. He should then yearn and desire to be among those who serve Him, to exult in His praise and be exalted by His greatness.**

**The love and fear of God] are powerful means which draw an individual close to God. They enlighten the physical darkness in man, cause his soul to radiate in all its brightness, and thus elevate him step by step until he attains a state of closeness to God.**

**God granted us one particular means which can bring man close to God more than anything else. This is the study of His revealed Torah.**

**Such study accomplishes this in two ways:**

- **first through the reading of the Torah, and**
- **secondly through its comprehension.**

**In His love, God composed a volume of words decreed by His wisdom and bestowed it upon us...His Torah. This is the Torah and later works of the Prophets, making up the Bible as we know it.**

**These words have the unique property of causing one who reads them to incorporate in himself the highest excellence and greatest perfection. The only condition is that they be read with holiness and purity, with the proper intent of fulfilling God's will.**

**Similarly, when one strives to understand these works, either through his own intellect or through the explanations provided in their commentaries, he can earn even greater perfection, according to his effort. This is even more true when one attains a grasp of the secrets and mysteries contained in these works, since**

**each of these concepts that one understands fixes and integrates a certain degree of the highest levels of excellence and perfection in his soul.**

**Through all these acts, man not only earns excellence and perfection for himself, but he also elevates and perfects the entire fabric of creation. This is particularly true in the case of the study of the Torah. The Highest Wisdom decreed that every act of observing God's commandments should bring a person closer to God to a particular determined degree. The individual then attains a degree of God's light corresponding to this degree of closeness, and this in turn causes a degree of perfection resulting from that enlightenment to become an integral part of him.**

**The opposite is true of sin. Every sinful act removes an individual from God by a corresponding degree. This results in bringing him to a certain degree of concealment away from God's light, causing His presence to be correspondingly hidden. As a result of that concealment, a degree of deficiency becomes an integral part of that individual.**

***We therefore see that the true purpose of the commandments is to turn us toward God, bring ourselves near to Him, and thus be enlightened by His presence. The avoidance of sin likewise enables one to avoid matters that would lead him away from God. This is the true purpose of all the commandments.***

**The main point of creation was that God wanted to create man, who would then have the task of attaching himself to God, thus to enjoy His true good. This is accomplished through the fact that man has two ways before him, one being good and the other evil; and man has the power to choose whichever he desires. The Torah defines from God's view, the only one that matters, which actions are "good" and "evil" and does not leave it up to man to decide since he is incapable of knowing absolute good due to the affect of sin upon himself and his mind. Thus we need God's definitions on this and we have them in the Torah...the expression of the Highest Good and the Highest Love whereby man is now without excuse as to what to do and how to live. When through his own free will and knowledge he chooses good and rejects evil, then this true everlasting good is given him.**

**All other things were created only because the Highest Wisdom deemed them necessary in order for the universe to be complete, so that man could exist in the state mentioned above, where he could serve God and thus attain true good. Of course, we do not know why every single thing in the world was necessary. But what we do know from our sages is that the main element in all creation is man, and that all other things were created only for his sake, and furthermore, that the main purpose in man's creation was for him to attain the true good. However, the Highest Wisdom perceived that in order for man to attain this true good he must first be tested and pass his test. For this reason God created a world where he could be tested.**

**This is the physical world, a place where both good and evil exist, and where man can reject evil and choose good. God gave man the ability to motivate the highest good through his deeds. Man's deeds can therefore draw sustenance from God's holiness and the Light of His good. On the other hand, they can also transmit pollution and corruption. God specified certain deeds in His Torah through which holiness is transmitted, and commanded us to keep them. These are God's Laws. These include all the commandments that we are required to obey. On the other hand, He also specified certain deeds that bring about pollution, and commanded us to abstain from them. These include all things that are forbidden. These are better known as the positive and negative commandments. The greatest love God could give man is the knowledge of these issues and this was accomplished in the giving of His Torah. Instead of giving His Laws because man was sinful God gave them to mankind in order that man might attain his highest good and become attached to God though becoming like**

God though man's conduct and behavior. Such God-likeness is defined in each of the positive and negative commandments and to the degree man emulates these in his life he draws closer to God and perfects creation with God.

There is only one true good, however, and that is attachment to God. We have already explained that the commandments are the means which transmit the emanation of God's holiness and the Light of His good. These commandments are therefore the means through which true good can be achieved. The individual who sanctifies himself to a great degree with the emanation of God's holiness becomes fitting to be attached to Him and enjoy His true good. On the other hand, the person who corrupts himself with the pollution that we have mentioned becomes unfit to attach himself to God, and is therefore cast away from Him. True good as understood as Godliness and holiness is attained through good deeds and obedience to God's Law. Likewise the absence of the Highest Good is achieved as a result of evil deeds which is the denial of and the absence of obedience to God's Law.

**It is also necessary to realize that just as man was given the power to have both holiness and pollution transmitted to himself, so was he given the ability to have holiness or pollution transmitted to all creation through his deeds. Therefore all creation can be either rectified or damaged spiritually because of man. This is counted as a merit for the righteous who benefit creation, and a liability for the wicked who damage it.**

**Answer for yourself: Understanding this then do you now believer that the writer of Gal. 3:19 was accurate in saying that the Law of God was given because of the transgressions of mankind?**

***In painting the Law in such negative connotations the writer of Galatians chapter 3 has taken away from his readers the Divine intent of God in giving man His highest love....His Torah...His Law...properly understood as the method by which man might be like God though living and patterning his life after the Laws of God.***

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# ISA. 54:1 & SARAH AND HAGAR--PAUL'S ATTEMPT TO TEACH IN RABBINIC METHODS...GONE COMPLETELY AWRY

Paul was so overcome with hatred of his Judaizing rivals [those who taught obedience to the commandments along with faith] that he had difficulty keeping his thinking and arguments straight. With a little background of the Old Testament, Christians could easily see that at times Paul is a classic schizophrenic. Such is obvious to the dedicated student of Scripture, but such is not apparent to the casual reader. Only by laying passage against passage are such glaring errors easily noticeable and this takes a lot of time to accomplish. Over the last 15 years I have devoted myself to such scrupulous study and have discovered of what I now write. Paul's goal was to "put down" Judaizers (those teaching obedience to Torah (that part of it that referred to them as non-Jews in the Covenant of Noah) for Gentile acceptance with God as the fruit of their faith and not faith or mental ascent and affirmation of Paul's unique interpretation of his "Jesus"), whether Jews, Christians, or Gentiles. In opposition to Judaizers, Paul's analogies were derogatory to Jews. As usual he called on the Hebrew Bible to help him in his cause but has to misquote and lift out of context verses in order to give a false "Prophetic" authority for his doctrines when teaching those who lacked fundamental understanding of the Jewish Scriptures in the first place.

**In one of the most jumbled passages in the New Testament (Gal 4:21-31) Paul discussed Sarah and Hagar, Abraham's wife and Egyptian concubine, respectively.** The women and their children became allegorical representations. **However,** **Paul inverted their roles** so that Hagar, the slave woman, and her son [remember not the son of the promise but the son of the flesh and disobedience of Abraham] symbolized the Jews of Jerusalem supposedly enslaved by the Law and the Mosaic Covenant. Paul would have us believe that Ishmael [the son of the flesh because of Abraham's lack of faith in the Word of God when he took it upon himself to have a son with other than Sarah] was the symbol of the Jews given the Torah at Sinai and not Isaac, the son of the promise of Abraham (THINK)! Ishmael is not of faith but of flesh and Paul compares the results of "flesh" to Isaac (the son of faith) and gets it completely backward!

**Answer for yourself: How are we to believe this analogy…is white black and black white?**

**Paul goes on to characterize Sarah and her offspring as becoming the free Gentiles "in the Jerusalem that is above."**

**Answer for yourself: Are we to believe that the Sarah, the mother of the son of Abraham who is the promised child to whom God renews the Abrahamic Covenant with later, is to representative of the Gentiles no less to whom the Abrahamic Covenant was never renewed?**

**Yet, Isaac and his descendants were later depicted as the "Children of promise," a term who for Paul for some reason meant not the Jewish people who accepted the Unconditional Abrahamic Covenant with God, but meant rather the uncircumcised Gentiles who refused the Law but accepted Yeshua instead.**

# PAUL MISUSE ISA. 54:1 TO MAKE HIS PREMISE WORK

**The verse that Paul chose to support his creative scenario was Isaiah 54:1, the contents of which again bear no relation to Sarah and Hagar. Again Paul misquotes verses in order to justify his pre-formed theological aberrations. It reads as follows:**

- **Sing O barren woman that did not bear**
- **Break forth in singing and cry aloud that you did not travail**
- **For more are the children of the desolate**
- **Than the children of the married woman, said the Lord.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul connects the "barrenness" of Sarah to the Jews who obey the commandments and the Law as their response to their faith in God, yet the verse has nothing to do with obedience to commandments? He takes the passage completely out of context and the parallel is not sound!**

**Answer for yourself: What is the historical meaning of the Isaiah passage?**

***This verse is the beginning of another encouraging chapter in Isaiah dealing with the joy and glorious future of Israel upon return to Zion from captivity and has absolutely nothing to do with the commandments of God.***

**Isaiah had addressed Jerusalem in allegorical terms. Before exile, when Israel was united with God (actually married to God), Jerusalem was very populous. During the exile and deportation of the Jews the city was desolate like a childless woman. Now, upon the return of the Judeans to the homeland following the captivity because they disobeyed God's Laws, the city would know again honor and prosperity and would have an even greater population.**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you think it rather impossible to believe Paul, that obedience to the Law and the commandments instead of faith alone was "barrenness" when Isaiah expresses the exact opposite: great Joy at the return of the exiles to Israel where they can again begin to obey God and His Laws since re-established in their land...their disobedience of the same Laws that cause their exile in the first place (THINK)?**

**Nowhere in Isaiah is any reference to be construed that obedience to God's commandments by the Jews led to spiritual barrenness as Paul would have us believe.**

**Nor is there any idea connected to the original passage in Isaiah that a "second" covenant was better than the "first" covenant, or that a second covenant had replaced the covenant re-affirmed with Isaac and which would likewise be re-affirmed with Jacob.**

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# PAUL'S MISUSE OF PSALM 8:5-7 IN HEBREWS 2:6-8

**Although it cannot be proven for certainty, the tradition of the Church maintains Pauline authorship for the book of Hebrews. As early as the second century Paul was regarded in the East as the author, and during the third century his authorship was the accepted view. In the West, where the epistle was known from earliest times, Pauline authorship was rejected and did not gain acceptance until the fourth century.**

**Heb.2:6-8 quoted Psalm 8:5-7 as follows:**

***What is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you should care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor, You have set him over the works of your hands you have put all things under his feet.***

**Answer for yourself: To whom does the author of this passage in Psalms refer?**

**Again, the writer of Hebrews applied the passage exclusively to Yeshua rather than to all mankind by saying, "Yeshua, who was made a little lower than the angels, is now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death" (Heb. 2:9). This is a direct contradiction of the explicit statements in the psalm. The Hebrews writer changed the meaning of the text which tells us that God endowed all of humanity with a spiritual element and a mastery over the rest of nature. This thought was also expressed in Gen. 1:28. The psalmist's view of God's plan is far more democratic and humanitarian than the apostle Paul's doctrine. To make it sound like the Psalmist is speaking of "Jesus" in that verse totally destroys the intent of what God was saying and desired you understand from the passage. Yet that is done by the Hebrews writer; whether it be Paul or a pro-Pauline writer at a later date.**

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# PAUL WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE THAT GENTILES WHO ACCEPT HIS UNIQUE GOSPEL ARE NOW THE "NEW ISRAEL"....HOW ABSURD PAUL!

**As the self-appointed apostle to the Gentiles, Paul pushed the interests of his constituency at the expense of Jews and the messages of their prophets. As we have seen in my previous articles, Paul accomplished this by adding to or changing the words of Old Testament Scriptures so that their meaning was foreign to the original passage and what God intended His people understand. Paul repeated this same pattern in his use of Hosea's prophecy regarding Israel's redemption.**

**In Rm. 9:25-26 Paul professed to quote from Hosea 2:25 and 2:1. Paul's rendering of the two transposed passages of Hosea is**

- ***I will call them my people who are not my people***
- ***And I will call her my loved one who is not my loved one.***
- ***It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them***
- ***'You are no my people', There they will be called the sons of the living God***

**Paul evoked Hosea's verses as a "proof" of his thesis that God had called the Gentiles to be His people along with the Jews. He inferred that these verses were addressed to Gentiles and not to people of Israel. What I find amazing is that Paul offers to his Gentile followers the distinction of being called "Israel" yet without the very thing that caused them to become a "Holy Nation and a Royal Priesthood" in the first place...namely the acceptance of the Words of God at Sinai...His Laws.**

***Exod 19:8 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. (KJV)***

**This dear ones refer to God's Laws and Commandments; the very same Laws that Paul negates and preaches deliverance from!**

**Before answering Paul's claim, let us look briefly a prophet and the episodes leading to his prophecy.**

**Hosea's life was an allegory of the relationship between God and Israel. Hosea's unfaithful wife symbolized**

**Israel's infidelity to God and Hosea's children's names, "No Mercy" and "Not My People," reflected God's attitude toward Israel and not the Gentile nations. However, the situation changed and God forgave the nation. Hosea's ransom of his wife from prostitution represented the redemption of Israel after it had been purge of it's sinfulness.**

**In Hosea 2:25 God spoke, through the prophet, of that redemption and forgiveness of Israel, in this way:**

***And I will have compassion on her that had not obtained compassion And I will say to them that were not My people: "You are My people;" And they will say: "You are my God."***

**Take a minute to read chapter 2 of Hosea before you proceed. Thanks.**

Throughout Chapter 2 of Hosea, where the above verses are found which Paul misquoted and again used out of context, the message is straightforward. **God reversed the negative decree against Israel. He accepted the nation as His own and would show it** compassion as a result of its repentance and making amend (not their faith alone but faith that repents and finally obeys).

**Now listen carefully because I have heard this passage preached wrong so many times.** These words were addressed by Hosea exclusively to Israel and not to any other people (non-Jews). **He came from Israel and was designated by God as a prophet to Israel and not to the Gentile nations!**

**Answer for yourself: Having seen for yourself that God commanded Hosea to name one of his children "Not My People," does it not stand to reason that when God says He will "call them…who are not my people" [Hosea's child was representative of the Jews] "sons of the living God," that He was** re-accepting **the Jewish people?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you catch and understand, when you read the chapter, the key phrase** "in the very place where it was said to them 'Your are not my people'" **that this phrase pinpoints exactly where and to whom the prophecy is directed…..**the Jewish people in Israel where the prophecy was first delivered**?**

Paul would have us believe it is referring to non-Jews who were not God's people, but who through his ministry and acceptance of the Pauline Yeshua, are now God's people (the sons of the living God). Paul would have us believe the the Jews' refusal to accept his unique understanding of the Messiah (which goes totally against the Jewish Scriptures) caused them to be replaced by Paul's Gentile believers as the "New Israel Of God." Such is a total perversion of the text. Again Paul takes a Jewish passage out of context and completely changes the subject of the passage which the original writer intended.

***Again Paul quotes from a Prophet and borrows Prophetic authority for his unique message but completely changes the meaning of the text in doing so. But Paul is wrong again in his use of the Jewish Scriptures and completely twists the intended meaning of the Prophet for his personal theological agenda***

## GOYIM, GENTILES, AND NATIONS — PAUL'S REPLACEMENT OF THE JEWS IN THE PLAN OF GOD

**Since Paul's main interest was in the Gentiles, he endeavored repeatedly to inject the concept of "Gentile replacement of the Jews" into his quotations from the Hebrew Bible when it was not the natural translation or obvious meaning of the Hebrew word, "goyim". In Rom. 15 there are four passages from the Hebrew Bible in which the word "Gentiles" is used inappropriately. It should be noted that in the original Greek which Paul wrote and even in the Latin translation in the Vulgate [Catholic Bible] the word used is "nations" which is an exact translation of the Hebrew. But in the current modern translations from the Greek, the New Testament conveys a different meaning.**

**Thus, each of the following quotations from Romans gives a different impression to the reader than the original verse provides when it is correctly translated and seen in its Jewish context as taken from the Jewish Scriptures. Each phrase is juxtaposed below, as I compare for you how the wording appears in Romans on the first line and how it appears in the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible) on the second line. You be the judge if Paul has faithfully represented the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament!**

**Romans I5:19**

**I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name.**

**Psalm 18:50**

**Therefore, I will give thanks Unto You, O Lord, among the *nations,* I will sing praises to Your name.**

**Next we have:**

**Romans I5:10**

**Rejoice you Gentiles with his people**

**Deuteronomy 32:43**

**Sing aloud, you nations, of His people.**

**Next we have:**

**Romans I5:11**

**Praise the Lord all you Gentiles**

**Psalm 117:1**

**Praise the Lord all you nations**

**Next we have:**

**Romans I5:12**

**There shall be the root of Jesse And he that arises to rule over the Gentiles, On him shall the Gentiles hope;**

**Isaiah 11:10**

**It shall come to pass in that day That the root of Jesse that stands for an ensign of the peoples; Him shall the nation seek,**

**Answer for yourself: What should we learn from the passages quoted by Paul when comparing them with the contexts of the original verses in the Jewish Scriptures?**

- **Psalm 18 is a song of triumph by David calling on the nation he has conquered to join him in acknowledging God's role in his victory.**
- **Deut. 32 is a song of Moses recalling Israel's deliverance and inviting the nations to join Israel in expressing gratitude to God.**
- **Psalm 117, shortest in the Psalter, summons all nations to praise God. Isaiah's verse refers to the return of the exiles rallying to the symbol of David and inviting all nations to join them.**

**The above phrases include a song of triumph, a song of deliverance, a summons to praise God, and a rallying cry of the people. Each verse appeals to all nations to join Israel [NOT REPLACE ISRAEL] in exalting and praising God. But not one of these verses is a call to the Gentiles to follow and acclaim anyone but the God of Israel who is the Covenant making God. God's Covenants again are His Laws imposed upon His subjects. Paul's purpose in addressing the Gentiles or nations in the above verses becomes clear in the light of proclamations in the preceding chapters of this epistle where he negates the Law of God. Take Rom. 10:4 for example; (Christ is the end of the law)....This is but one example among many in which Paul changes the religion of Yeshua for his Gentiles by teaching the abolition of the Laws of God which is contrary to which Yeshua and Moses and the Prophets always taught. Shalom.**

**The very irony of this is that the acceptance of Paul's theology and Paul's Jesus as a replacement for the Law and the true salvation of God render those who do so not the "New Israel" as Paul would have you believe...but the "rejected Israel" of God who are "not His people."**

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# CAN PAUL MISQUOTE HABAKKUK AND GET AWAY WITH IT? WELL HE HAS!

**Paul and Barnabas stated that while David's body decayed at death, Yeshua's did not. This lack of decay of Yeshua's body as seen in his resurrection as taught by his most intimate followers was interpreted by them as proof, supposedly for Paul and Barnabas, that: "And by him (Yeshua) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:39).**

**Next we get a warning from Luke that if you do not believe what Paul had just said then upon you will come all which was spoken by Habakkuk the prophet.**

**The Luke admonished his listeners to believe this claim (remission of sins through Yeshua) on the basis of a verse from the prophet, Habakkuk 1:5, as quoted in Acts 13:41:**

***"Look you scoffers (or despisers) wonder and perish because I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe even if someone told you."***

**This is effective to scare almost anyone to never doubt what Paul said. Is that you? Well let us investigate this claim.**

## IS PAUL AND HIS MISUSE OF THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES ABOVE QUESTIONING?

**Again this verse as quoted in Acts 13:41 is taken out of context. Let me explain.**

**Habakkuk's mission was between 607 and 586 B.C.E. In his short book the prophet protested to God for allowing the wicked to prosper and the innocent to suffer. This is a problem with which Jeremiah, Malachi, and Job wrestled and challenged the Almighty. God had shown Habakkuk the terrible suffering that would befall Israel at the hands of Babylonia. It is with this background that we arrive at verse 5 of Chapter 1 in Habakkuk as it appears in translation from the original Hebrew text. "Look among the nations and behold and wonder in amazement for a work shall be wrought in your days which you will not believe though it be told you."**

***"Look among the nations and behold and wonder in amazement for a work shall be wrought in your days which you will not believe though it be told you."***

**Answer for yourself: What was this "work that shall be wrought in your days" which they would have a hard**

**time believing?**

**Answer for yourself: Keeping our interpretation within the context of what Habakkuk said, was "this work that shall be wrought in their days which would be hard to believe" concerning not believing in the remission of sins as Paul is said to have taught as said by Luke (notice this work was to be accomplished 600 years before Yeshua's birth according to Habakkuk)? No way.**

**Answer for yourself: Or was this "work…hard to believe" the invasion and deportation of Jewry along with the destruction of the Temple? You got it! This invasion and destruction of the Temple would be very hard for the Jews to believe. The Temple was one of the seven wonders of the world.**

## *To apply this verse to Yeshua is totally a perversion of Biblical interpretation.*

**Since the context of Habakkuk deals with the Chaldeans (Babylonians), the "work that shall be wrought in your days" has to be during the time frame when the Babylonians were a threat to the Jews. Paul used this passage are applying to the time of Yeshua's and connected it to remission of sins. This is a flagrant misuse and quote of the Jewish Prophet and totally takes his message out of context. It is one thing to say something and totally another to use a Prophet's oracle and present it to non-Jews unaware of what the Prophet and his message originally intended. With the almost total ignorance of the Jewish Scriptures in the Christian Church today little has changed.**

**Answer for yourself: Tell me now, was it the Romans or the Babylonians who posed the problem for the Jews during the time of Yeshua?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that this quote by Luke, supposedly from the mouth of Paul, was misappropriated 700 years and concerned itself with a totally different situation never intended by the original author?**

**Answer for yourself: It is right to propose that what you are teaching is a fulfillment of a Prophet's oracle when it is not? This technique is done so often in the New Testament it is almost beyond counting!**

**In this verse the prophet Habakkuk, speaking in God's name, announced to the people the terrible and incredulous events which would befall them and which they would find impossible to believe. Even more significant is how totally unrelated this passage from Habakkuk is to the subject of remission of sins. This was never Habakkuk's intention. There is nothing in Habakkuk remotely related to that topic.**

# HOW DID THE NEW TESTAMENT GET SO FAR OFF TRACK AND SO FAR FROM THE TRUTH?

**The Lukan author of Acts who attributed these sermons to Paul and Barnabas either lost the thread of the original theme or did not understand the passage. Such an address could only succeed with an audience as ignorant of the message of the prophet as was the writer (Gentiles who were not well versed in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures). It saddens me to say that such an audience fill the churches of Contemporary Christianity today. They repeatedly read the New Testament but spend little time with the Jewish Scriptures. Thus when the New Testament records and quotes in error passages from the Old Testament nobody knows! May God forgive us!**

## *Again a Jew would not make this mistake*

**Answer For Yourself: This again brings into question as to who the authors really are who wrote the New**

**Testament which does such violence to the Jewish Scriptures?**

***Let us not forget that as Christians we are told to believe the writers of the New Testament are supposedly apostles of Yeshua. We would expect that they, anointed of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, supposedly knew and were familiar with the Jewish texts to the point where they could never make such mistakes in interpretation, or even worse, add to or take away for the Holy Word Of God. In no way can this be construed to be the work of the Holy Spirit!***

**Answer For Yourself: Can God make such mistakes in context concerning books He already revealed to Holy men of old? I think not!**

**As for Habakkuk, the rest of the chapter and message is that the morally upright in Israel may suffer for a time, but in the end, they would survive to taunt their oppressors. The flip side of the message is that the wicked would enjoy temporary success but would eventually be overthrown. God commands we add not nor take away from His Word and in such imprecise use of His Word where passages are continually taken out of context for theological purpose in the presentation of Jesus to the unsuspecting and unknowledgeable Gentiles of the world in order to make Jesus out to be something he is not nor was ever intended to be is not only a travesty but an affront to our Holy God!**

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# IN ADAM ALL DIED...OR DID THEY? PAUL'S MISQUOTE OF DEUTERONOMY 30:14

**According to standard Pauline and Christian dogma all of us, apparently without exception, are sinners. By this we mean not merely that all of us sin, but that all of us have a depraved or corrupted nature which so inclines us toward sin that it is virtually inevitable as if some common factor is at work in all of mankind. It is as if some antecedent or "a priori" factor in life leads us to universal sinning and universal depravity. Many have struggled to determine what is this common factor which is often referred to as original sin. The basic answer for this whole concept of "original sin" comes from Romans 5:**

***Rom 5:12 12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (KJV)***

**This thought is repeated in several different ways in the succeeding verses:**

***Rom 5:15-19 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (KJV)***

***1 Cor 15:21-22 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (KJV)***

## PAUL'S MAJOR CONTRADICTION THAT FEW SEE WHEN READING ROMANS

**Let me stress that in Paul's mind there is some sort of causal connection between what Adam did and the sinfulness of all men throughout all time. There has been a number of attempts to understand and elucidate this Adamic influence (Pelagianism, Arminiansim, Calvinism). But be not mistaken the key passage for constructing a model of original sin is Rom. 5:12-19. Paul is arguing that death is the consequence of sin and in this regard he is correct. The twelfth verse is particularly determinative:**

***"Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread***

***to all men because all men sinned--."***

**Whatever be the exact meaning of these words, Paul certainly is saying that death originated in the human race because of Adam's sin and again this is correct. Death was first experience by Adam and this is directed attributed to "his" sin and not the "sin of others." Here Paul is saying that "death" is the penalty for "every individual" that sins and he personally will pay for such sin with "his own death." This is Biblical! Paul also says that death is universal and the cause of this is the universal sin of mankind; again this is Biblical and all that Paul has done is look at "sin" and "death" on a larger level than just "one" man.**

**Later; however, Paul contradicts what he has just said and he says that the cause of the death of all is the sin of one man, Adam:**

- **"many died through one man's trespass" (v15);**
- **"because of one' man's trespass, death reigned through that one man" (v17).**

**If you did not notice Paul again contradicted himself and the problem most Christians fail to see is in what Paul said we have an impasse; the problem exists as to how to relate the statement that the universality of death came through the sin of Adam (one man) to the statement that it came through the sin of all men. We cannot have it both ways and most Christians totally miss this!**

# COMING TO THE TRUTH ABOUT SIN FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

**The term "original sin" is unknown to the Jewish scriptures, and the church's teachings on this doctrine are antithetical to the core principles of the Torah and its prophets. Before proceeding, however, it is important that our website visitors understand the Christian doctrine on original sin.**

**According to church teachings, the mortal sin committed by our first parents in the Garden of Eden had catastrophic consequences for the human race. Most importantly, Christendom holds that these devastating effects extend far beyond the curses of painful childbirth and laborious farming conditions outlined in the third chapter of Genesis.**

**This well-known church doctrine posits that when Adam and Eve rebelled against God and ate from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, all of their descendants became infected with the stain of their transgression. Moreover, as a consequence of this first iniquity, man is hopelessly lost in a state of sin in which he has been held captive since this fall. As a result, he is powerless to follow the path of obedience and righteousness by his own free will. Rather, Christendom contend, because all are born with an innate and uncontrollable lust for sin, humanity can do nothing to merit its own salvation. In essence, man is totally depraved and true free will is far beyond his grasp. "Totally depraved" may seem to be a harsh way for a Christian doctrine to depict mankind's dire condition, yet this is precisely the term used by the church to describe man's desperate, sinful predicament. It is only through faith in Jesus, Christendom concludes, that hopeless man can be saved.**

**In summary Christendom maintains that "all human beings are born with an innate tendency to disobey God." While this statement is superficially correct, it fails to convey the far-reaching scope of this church doctrine. In fact, Christians insist that as a result of the fall in the Garden of Eden, man's unquenchable desire for sin is virtually ungovernable. In Christian terms, man is not inclined toward sin but more accurately is a slave to sin. As a result, the church concludes, short of converting to Christianity, humanity can do nothing to save itself from hell.**

**Bear in mind, there is good reason for the church's uncompromising stand on this cherished doctrine. The founders of Christianity understood that if man can save himself from eternal damnation through his own initiative and obedience to God, the church would have very little to offer the human race. Moreover, if righteousness can be achieved through submission to the commandments outlined in the *Torah*, what possible benefit could Jesus' death provide for mankind? Such self-probing thoughts, however, were unimaginable to those who shaped primitive Christianity.**

**Despite the zealous position Christians take as they defend this creed, the Christian doctrine on original sin is profoundly hostile to the central teachings of the Jewish scriptures. Over and over again the *Torah* loudly dismisses the notion that man has lost his divinely endowed capacity to freely choose good over evil, life over death. This is not a hidden or ambiguous message in the Jewish scriptures. On the contrary, it is proclaimed in virtually every teaching that Moses directs to the children of Israel.**

**In fact, in an extraordinary sermon delivered by Moses in the last days of his life, the prophet stands before the entire nation and condemns the notion that man's condition is utterly hopeless. Throughout this uplifting exhortation, Moses declares that it is man alone who can and must merit his own salvation. Moreover, as he unhesitatingly speaks in the name of God, the lawgiver thoroughly rejects the notion that obedience to the Almighty is "too difficult or far off" and declares to the children of Israel that righteousness has been placed within their reach.**

**Deuteronomy 30 isn't a quiet chapter and its verses read as though the Torah is bracing the Jewish people for the Christian doctrines that would confront them many centuries later. As the last Book of the Pentateuch draws to a close, Moses admonishes his young nation not to question their capacity to remain faithful to the mitzvot of the Torah. Deuteronomy 30:10-14 states:**

***" . . if you will hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law; if you turn unto the Lord thy God with all your heart and with all your soul; for this commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you neither is it too far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, and make us hear it, that we may do it?" Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say: "Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it that we may do it?" The word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.***

**The Jewish people have drawn great comfort and encouragement from this uplifting promise. For the church, however, Moses' strong message created a theological disaster.**

**Answer for yourself: How could the authors of the New Testament reasonably insist that man's dire condition was hopeless if the *Torah* unambiguously declared that man possessed an extraordinary ability to remain faithful to God?**

**Answer for yourself: How could the church fathers possibly contend that the *mitzvot* in the *Torah* couldn't save the Jewish people when the Creator proclaimed otherwise?**

**Answer for yourself: How could missionaries conceivably maintain that the commandments of the *Torah* are too difficult when the *Torah* declares that they are "not far off," "not too hard," and "you may do it"?**

**This staggering problem did not escape the keen attention of Paul. Bear in mind, the author of Romans and Galatians constructed his most consequential doctrines on the premise that man is utterly depraved and incapable of saving himself through his own obedience to God. In chapter after chapter he directs his largely gentile audiences toward the cross and away from Sinai as he repeatedly insists that man is lost without Jesus.**

**Answer for yourself: Yet how could Paul harmonize this wayward theology with the Jewish scriptures in which his teachings were not only unknown, but thoroughly condemned? Even with the nimble skills that Paul possessed, welding together the church's young doctrine on original sin with diametrically opposed teachings of the Jewish scriptures would not be a simple task.**

## PAUL'S PURPOSEFUL MISQUOTE OF DEUT. 30:14

**Employing unparalleled literary manipulation, however, Paul manages to conceal this vexing theological problem with a swipe of his well-worn eraser. In fact, Paul's innovative approach to biblical tampering was so remarkable that it would set the standard of scriptural revisionism for future New Testament authors.**

**A classic example of this biblical revisionism can be found in Romans 10:8 where Paul announces to his readers that he is quoting directly from scripture as he records the words of Deuteronomy 30:14. Yet as he approaches the last portion of this verse, he carefully stops short of the *Torah's* vital conclusion and expunges the remaining segment of this crucial verse. In Romans 10:8 Paul writes,**

***But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach).***

**Predictably, the last words of Deuteronomy 30:14, "that you may do it," were meticulously deleted by Paul. Bear in mind that he had good reason for removing this clause -- the powerful message contained in these closing words rendered all that Paul was preaching as heresy.**

**This stunning misquote in Romans stands out as a remarkable illustration of Paul's ability to shape scriptures in order to create the illusion that his theological message conformed to the principles of the *Torah.* By removing the final segment of this verse, Paul succeeded in convincing his largely gentile readers that his Christian teachings were supported by the principles of the Hebrew Bible WHEN THEY ARE NOT!**

## COMPARING PAUL'S QUOTE OF DEUT. 30:14 IN ROM. 10:8 WITH WHAT THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES REALLY SAID

**Deut. 30:14 as taken from the Jewish Scriptures:**

***But the word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it***

**Paul's supposed quote of Moses as found in Rom. 10:8**

***But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach)***

**The question that immediately comes to mind is:**

**Answer for yourself: How can Paul deliberately remove a vital clause from Moses' message and still expect to gain a following among the Jewish people? What does God think about those who add to or take away from His Word?**

**While considering this question, we can begin to understand why Paul attained great success among his gentile audiences and utterly failed among the Jews who were unimpressed with his contrived**

**message, and knowing their own Jewish Scriptures, could spot easily**

**It is for this reason that although both Paul and the writer of the Gospel of Matthew quoted extensively from the Jewish scriptures, they achieved a very different result.**

**Paul was largely a minister to gentile audiences who were ignorant of the Jewish Bible (the only Bible in existence at the time). As a result, they did not possess the skills necessary to discern between genuine Judaism and Bible tampering. These illiterate masses were, as a result, vulnerable, and eagerly consumed everything that Paul taught them. The same conditions can be found in Gentile Christianity today! In fact, throughout the New Testament it was exclusively the Jewish apostates to Christianity who challenged Paul's authority, never the gentile community.**

**Matthew, on the other hand, directed all of his evangelism and Bible quotes to Jewish audiences. Jewish people, however, were keenly aware of Matthew's manipulation of their Bible. As a result, the first Gospel failed to effectively reach its intended Jewish readers. It required little more than a perfunctory reading of the first few chapters in the Book of Matthew for Jewish people to determine that there was no prophecy in Isaiah that foretold that a virgin would give birth to a messiah. Likewise, the Jewish people were doubly unimpressed with Matthew's claim that the messiah was to be a resident of Nazareth, when no such prophecy existed. The people of Israel concluded that Matthew had engaged in a willful and unrestrained corruption of their sacred scriptures. Consequently, the author of the first Gospel failed in his effort to convert his targeted Jewish audiences to Christianity.**

**Ironically, there was no individual in history who was more responsible for the strong resistance of the Jewish people to the Christian message than Matthew. In contrast, the person most responsible for the church's unparalleled success among the gentiles was unquestionably the apostle Paul. Not surprisingly, throughout the biblical narrative, gentiles had always had a terrible time discerning chaff from wheat, truth from heresy; and the Jews were repeatedly warned never to emulate them. Tragically, some of the Jewish people missed this crucial message and are taken in today, for example, by Jews for Jesus who use corrupted texts to support their theological arguments and the failure of many contemporary secularized Jews fall to such deceptions because of their own failure to know their own Jewish Scriptures.**

**Paul, however, should have been tipped off that his teachings on original sin were misguided and that his broad-brushed characterization of humanity was erroneous. In fact, the Jewish scriptures repeatedly praised numerous men of God for their unwavering righteousness. For example, the Bible declared that men like Caleb (Numb. 14:24) and King Josiah (2 Kings 22:2) were faithful throughout their extraordinary lives. Moreover, because of their devotion to their Creator, Abraham and Daniel were the objects of the Almighty's warm affection as He tenderly referred to Abraham as "My friend" (Isa. 41:8) and Daniel, "beloved" (Dan. 9:23; 10:11; 10:19). These extraordinary people did not merit these remarkable superlatives because they believed in Jesus or depended on a blood atonement; but rather, it was their devotion to God and unyielding obedience to His *Torah* that shaped their lives.**

**Job's unique loyalty to God stands as a permanent enigma to Christian theology as well. Here was a man who was severely tested by Satan and endured unimaginable personal tragedies, yet despite these afflictions, Job remains the model of the righteous servant of God. While in Christian theology Job's personal spiritual triumph is a theological impossibility, in Jewish terms it stands out as the embodiment of God's salvation program for mankind. Job didn't rely on Jesus to save him and he certainly did not turn to the cross for his redemption; rather, it was his unswerving obedience to God that made his life a lesson for all of humanity.**

**Paul's unfounded doctrine on original sin dirties the exemplary legacies of these and many other great men of God. Moreover, Christians must ponder whether it is an insult to the Creator to label all of God's human creation depraved.**

# LUKE DISAGREES WITH PAUL.....AMAZING

**Quite unwittingly, Luke committed a striking theological blunder that severely undermined Paul's teachings on original sin. In the first chapter of Luke, the evangelist seeks to portray Elizabeth, who is the cousin of Mary, and her husband Zechariah as the virtuous parents of John the Baptist. Yet in his zeal to characterize the baptizer's mother and father as saints, Luke unwittingly writes,**

***"Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly." (Luke 1:6)***

**Answer for yourself: The question that immediately comes to mind is how can any thinking Christian possibly harmonize Paul's insistence that all humanity is depraved when Luke insists that Elizabeth and Zechariah were to be regarded as "blameless"?**

**This is a stunning blooper for Luke to make when it was he who eagerly promoted Paul in his Book of Acts.**

**Answer for yourself: Doesn't Luke's assertion that this couple observed "all the Lord's commandments" fly in the face of Paul's central teaching that no one is capable of keeping the *mitzvot* of the *Torah?* Is it not a fact that Christianity teaches that this task is impossible?**

**Paul never lived to read the Book of Luke, yet throughout his epistles Paul sidesteps any statement in the Jewish scriptures that could undermine his teaching on original sin. For example, immediately after the sin of Adam and Eve is narrated, the Torah declares that man can master his passionate lust for sin. In Genesis 4:6-7, God turns to Cain and warns him,**

***If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? If, though, you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you shall master over it.***

**For Christian architects like Paul, Augustine, and Calvin, this declaration of man's capacity to restrain and govern his lust for sin is nothing short of heresy. Moreover, the fact that the *Torah* places these assuring words immediately following the sin in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3) is profoundly troubling for the church.**

**Answer for yourself: How can depraved humanity control its iniquity when the Book of Romans repeatedly insists that man can do nothing to release himself from sin's powerful grip? Yet notice that there is nothing in the Eden narrative that could be construed as support for Paul's teaching on humanity's dire condition. On the contrary, in just these two inspiring verses, the Torah dispels forever the church's teachings on original sin.**

# WASHING AWAY SINS THROUGH BAPTISM?

**We find a very interesting passage in the book of Acts supposedly written by Paul's friend Luke that says:**

***Acts 22:16 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. (KJV)***

**Many sects and denominations of Christianity teach that "water baptism is required for the removal of this sin." In reality the church has simply replaced one commandment with another. On the one hand, the church teaches that the commandments explicitly ordained by the *Torah* are to be abandoned by believing Christians. Yet in the very same breath, the church then introduces this brand new commandment declaring that its parishioners must undergo a water baptism to be saved. It would seem more logical that if you were going to**

**contemplate observing commandments, you might as well devote your loyalty to those *mitzvot* ordained by God rather than those introduced by Gentile Christianity which by now you have seen have been less than honest when dealing with the Jewish Scriptures.**

**The notion that man is saved by being washed in water or forgiven through human blood is unknown to the Jewish scriptures. The Almighty does, however, clearly lay out His sovereign plan for His covenant people when he declares,**

***"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil." (Deuteronomy 30:15)***

**Answer for yourself: What is this "life" and "good" of which the Torah speaks? Christians insist that the Jewish nation must convert to Christianity and believe in a crucified messiah in order to be saved. The *Torah*, however, disagrees. Throughout the Hebrew Bible the Almighty unambiguously declares that the children of Israel are to draw near to Him with intense love and faithfully keep His commandments. This is the desire of the Creator. Moses beseeches the children of Israel,**

***I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees, and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. (Deuteronomy 30:16)***

**Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, remained intensely loyal to God's commandments and, as a result, the Torah regards our first patriarch as the paradigm of faithfulness.**

***I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws. (Genesis 26:4-5)***

**The Almighty did not give us desires that we cannot govern or commandments that we could not keep. The Torah was not delivered to angels, it was given to the children of Israel long after our first ancestors transgressed in the Garden of Eden.**

**In Jewish terms, sin is not a person, it's an event, and that event happened yesterday. In chapter after chapter, the prophets of Israel beseech those who lost their way to turn back to the Merciful One because today is a new day.**

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# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION TO PAUL'S BLATANT AND PURPOSEFUL MISUSE OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES IN HIS WRITINGS

**Here I will conclude this series of articles dealing with verses drawn from the Hebrew Bible which were misquoted and or misapplied in the New Testament which has led us to reject the religion of Yeshua, the "faith once given to the saints" and accept a counterfeit. These citations from Hebrew Scriptures molded into a predetermined pattern in order to serve as proof texts to promote one's man's agenda and not God's. They were to represent the *promise* that, the New Testament authors claimed, found *fulfillment* in their sacred writings. Having read and understood these articles, you now know different and better be looking to the Torah to see which commandments in the Torah apply to the Gentile believer in God. The manipulated quotations, more often than not, transmitted an anti-Torah, anti-Jewish, anti-Semitic ideology, and even an anti-Yeshua ideology [because he never supported or condoned what Paul preached]. I have endeavored to spend much effort on concentrating on confronting passages which deliberately or inadvertently emitted a negative view toward Judaism and its adherents. Those quotations which were mistreated or misinterpreted but conveyed no hostile message were not noted since that is beyond the scope of these articles at present.**

## WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

**First of all don't panic. All is not lost, for if you are reading this there is yet hope for you.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you remember the parable taught by Yeshua that laborers entered the vineyard at all times of the day and each received the same reward?**

**Well, it is not important how you have run your Christian walk up to now if it has been incorrect in many areas, but God's mercy has been shed abroad in you heart by bringing you to these truths. What is important is that you be like Abraham and act upon you faith in the truths you have learned and respond in obedience and no longer trust your misdirected zealousness for God because it cannot please God as does obedience to His Word [observance of the Commandments in your Covenant with God. Bet Emet Ministries cannot start to improve on what the Church teaches that is good and proper, but yet we have discovered truths long overlooked by a Church who was blinded by Gentile anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism over 1800 years ago. It is to these truths long over-looked that we endeavor to challenge our Christian readers with such truths.**

## SO WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO ME...A CHRISTIAN IN MY

# CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

**Answer for yourself: If the teaching aspects of the Law has not passed away then are we not still "under" the perfect Law of obedience? Yes.**

# ONE EXAMPLE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO SHOW THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner we do as taught by the vast majority of Christendom as it goes to church funds to be distributed as preachers will (building payments, insurance, bill, utilities, due, membership fees in organization, fancy dinners, etc), when the Laws of God SPECIFICALLY commands us that 1/3 of ALL of the Tithe is to go totally to the widows, orphans, sick, lame, blind, etc? We have no right and we sin in contributing to agencies if we let them distribute God's Tithe in such ways. Don't be deceived any longer!**

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner we do as taught by the vast majority of Christendom when God's Law SPECIFICALLY commands us that the second 1/3 of the Tithe is to go to YOU for the observance and celebration of the Feasts of the Lord as found in Lev. 23? We have no right and we sin in contributing to churches whose church calendars are filled with pagan holidays in which we affix the name of Yeshua to make them look religious?**

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner we do as taught by the vast majority of Christendom when God's Law SPECIFICALLY commands us that the third 1/3 of the Tithe is to go to the teaching Levite who today teaches you the truths in God's Word, and not to false teachers who have taught you to rob God? We have no right and we sin in contributing to churches in support of pastors who deceive you because of their lack of adequate study!**

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to neglect and fail to observe the patterns in Scripture that teach the non-Jews long before Moses keeping the Festivals and Sabbath of God which when understood reveal past, present, and future aspects of God's salvation? We don't!**

***Messianic Judaism is NOT Messianic Christianity!***

**Start to read and learn of Messianic Judaism and the real faith of Yeshua, and what part pertained to Gentiles for Eternal Life. Learn what commandments apply to you and begin to lay away "real" treasure in Heaven. Learn to choose those things that please God (Isa. 56) and choose to take upon yourself the yoke of Torah as you demonstrate your faith and love for God through Godly obedience to such things like the Sabbath, Biblical Festivals, and the Tithe as taught in the Bible and not by money hungry preachers today.**

**We at Bet Emet Ministries plead with you to share this material with loved ones that they may inherit the fullness of God's salvation by rethinking the message of preachers and Paul, thereby rightly dividing the Word of God that they will one day not stand ashamed before God. If you don't know or understand the Tithe or the Festivals ask of us and you shall receive the information you need in order that your worship of our Great God be in truth and Spirit and no longer in the vestiges of antisemitic lies.**

**If you would like more in-depth teachings concerning the Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith, please contact Pastor Craig Lyons as 972-675-6193 and we will be glad to help you begin to understand correctly the Hebrew Scriptures.**

**If you desire to learn more about "the faith once given to the saints" (Jude 3) contact us at:**


- **Bet Emet Ministries**
- **902 Cardigan**
- **Garland, Texas 75040**
- **E-Mail: bennoah1@airmail.net**


**Shalom and may God bless your studies and your efforts to show yourself not ashamed before Him one day soon!**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #1

**I can just hear many of my readers now: "There he goes again, tearing down my hero Paul". Well it is not my desire to build up or tear down anyone; only to get to the truth behind accounts in the New Testament which have been recorded in such a slanted way as to obscure truth. It is in the spirit of truth and critical historical study that we investigated great time and research to get the bottom of Paul's rebuke of Peter.**

**This issues at stake in such research affects every non-Jewish believer on this planet. This will become crystal clear if you take the challenge and read the forthcoming articles which will strip away many of the lies and half-truths portrayed in the New Testament. Dear one, whether you know it or not, the New Testament you carry in which you hold beliefs concerning "inerrancy and infallibility" is more truthfully understood to be a Roman religious propagandist document in which religion was used as a political glue to hold the crumbling Roman Empire together in the 2nd through 4th century when the Canon of the New Testament was organized.**

**James D.G. Dunn, in Jesus, Paul, and the Law, states on page 2 that: "The Antioch incident was a crucial episode in Paul's career. The question was , How crucial?" He goes on to challenge his readers with such questions as:**

- **What was it that the men from James demanded from Paul and his church?**
- **Why was it that they demanded such from Paul and his Jewish-Gentile church?**
- **What was it that Peter and other Jewish Christians withdrew from, and why?**
- **What effect did this Antioch incident have upon the future of Jew-and Gentile relationships in the churches of Yeshua?**
- **What effect did this Antioch incident have upon Paul's relationship with the Jerusalem Church and was his defense of his Apostleship in many of his epistles stem from the Jerusalem's rejection of Paul and "his gospel"?**

**One of the issues raised by this study was is the changing relationship between Paul and the Jerusalem church before and up to the Antioch incident. Prior to the Antioch incident Paul had been much less independent of Jerusalem than subsequently-hence the somewhat defensive tone of Galatians 1:10-2:10. Without a doubt Galatians 1-2 reflects a transition in Paul's relationship with Jerusalem and Yeshua's Church authorities. What you the reader must understand from the outset is that it is this rejection of Paul and "his gospel" by the Jerusalem Church which plays such an integral part in the overall picture of Paul's theology and its development. The Antioch incident marked a crucial stage in the development of Paul's theology and his separation from the Jerusalem Church. In Galatians Paul is striving to assert his independence from Jerusalem. I challenge you to read Galatians 1-2 with the understanding that those whom Paul opposes and who opposed him were Yeshua's brother James and the elders of the Jerusalem Church. This puts a whole new spin on Paul's self-vindication in his epistles. The inner tension should be noticeable by all. The problem is ascertaining whom the adversaries of Paul actually are. You can understand my amazement when I discovered over the years of**

**my study that the adversaries of Paul of whom he characterizes as "Judaizers" in the New Testament are the very one whom Yeshua walked with and taught for 40 days after his resurrection. To assume these "Judaizers" are wrong and that Paul is "right" makes Yeshua an incompetent who put the wrong men in charge of the Messianic Movement. To assume these "Judaizers" of Jerusalem, James and the Church of Yeshua are "wrong" is incredulous considering these same men had been filled with the "Spirit of Truth" on Pentecost. Surely the true anointing of God did not lead these men into error. James no less is the leader and head of Yeshua's church…the mother church for all missionary activity. It seems to me that these men at Jerusalem had it wrong then what does that say about Yeshua's competency in setting these men in authority especially in light of beliefs attached to him that he was resurrected from the dead and believed to be the Messiah of Israel. This is the tension we have. This is the setting we have that confronts our further study: Paul is opposed by James and the church and Paul is opposed to the same. Unfortunately we have only Paul's and Luke's account of the matter in the New Testament. Let it be remembered that this "Luke" was Paul's friend and companion in several of his trips. So if we are to come to the bottom of the matter then everything must be scrutinized for truthfulness. We can take nothing for granted nor shall we.**

# TROUBLING QUESTIONS TO CLOSE ON

**As we close understand what is at stake here. If James and the Jerusalem Church can be found to be in the right then that means Paul was not observant of the dictates of the Acts 15 Church Council that preceded the Antioch incident. Let us never forget that Acts attests for us in Acts 15:23 that the church wrote letters of their decision and attests these letters were to be sent to the churches in Asia to inform them of the decision. Not only that but verse 28 states that "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things". Take just a moment to notice that the decision of James and the Church was seen by the Holy Ghost to be "good" and "necessary" for the non-Jewish believer. We need to stop and take notice of such a thing and then ask ourselves: "What things"?**

**It seems certain things were mandated by God and enforced by Godly representatives for the non-Jewish believer to both observe and keep as part of his inclusion into the Israel of God whereby he received the gift of salvation. The seriousness of the matter is underscored by the fact that these "necessary" and "good" things will not be enforced by Paul to his Gentile churches; in fact Paul is instrumental in casting such things to the ground as if they were not important. This is the whole of the crux of the problem at Antioch. The letters informing of the Jerusalem Church's decision were intended to "strengthen" the Gentile Churches but the information within them had to be implemented among the Gentile converts and Godfearers.Paul would make several serious compromises the majority of which today escape the notice of the casual reader.**

**In the next articles I will point out each area of contention where Paul directly disobeyed both James, the Church, and the Holy Ghost and literally broke from being submissive to the Jerusalem authority and preached "his own gospel" in defiance of Jerusalem and the Holy Ghost's decision.**

**This I know is shocking to most because you have grown up with the positive account of Paul in the New Testament. But understand that this view of Paul is biased to say the least and far from the truth concerning this man. If you find the courage to continue reading I will prove, prove to you that the Paul of the New Testament is not a friend of Jerusalem Church let alone Yeshua whom you think he followed. In truth Paul did his own thing and this is what brought him into great contention with the Jerusalem Church and its authorities. Literally he would be summoned to Jerusalem twice to answer charges brought against him in his life; the first at the Acts 15 Council and finally in Acts 21 where he would publicly demonstrate under duress his obeisance to the Torah and complete the Nazarite vow which required of him the offering of blood offerings and sin offerings for atonement….and this 30 years after Yeshua's death. This fact alone should make one wonder what his true beliefs were concerning Yeshua's death being the final sacrifice for sin.**

**That was a lot to start with …ponder what has been said ..and let us continue with the second article in this series. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #2

**If one reads Galatians chapter one and two it is very informative as to Paul's relationship with the Jerusalem apostles. This is one of the key questions relating to the beginnings of Christianity which has never achieved a completely satisfactory resolution. It is clear enough that in Galatians itself Paul is striving to assert his independence from Jerusalem and Yeshua's Church. This cannot be disputed in light of historical facts.**

## THE EXEGESIS OF GALATIANS 2….LOOK AT WHAT WE FIND

**Paul finds himself in rather a difficult predicament. The facts of history already betrayed Paul as Gentile convert and a Sadducee, which when spurned in his love interest in the Chief Priest's daughter, defects to the Pharisees. So now we have Paul as a self-made Pharisee. Paul, wishing to defend his honor and reestablish his position in the religious hierarchy of Jerusalem, made such a attend following his "revelation" on the Damascus road. Paul desired independence from the Jerusalem Church yet needs their acknowledgment and authority for his missions.**

**In Gal. 1:15-17 we find Paul's admission that he, after receiving his revelation of Yeshua, "did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did he go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles". Paul makes a strong case that he did not "confer" with those who knew Yeshua best. That seems strange to me considering he persecuted the "way" of the Nazarenes and caused the death of many before his "enlightenment" on the road to Damascus.**

**The Greek word for confer, as taken from Galatians 1:16 tells us a lot:**

**4323 prosanatithemi-**

**1) to lay upon in addition to**

**2) to lay upon oneself in addition**

**a) to undertake besides**

**b) to put oneself upon another by going to him,**

**c) to commit or to betake oneself to another for the purpose of consulting him**

**d) to consult, to take one into counsel**

**e) to add from one's store**

**3) to communicate, to impart**

## DOES PAUL INCRIMINATE HIMSELF AND REVEAL HIS MOTIVES IN THIS WORD FROM GALATIANS 1:16?

**I believe that he does. In fact Paul's choice of words betrays his hidden attitude toward authority in his life. Remembering his rejection by the Chief Priest and the Sadducees, Paul set out to establish his own credibility and authority in response to his being rebuffed by the Temple authorities. If you wish to read in-depth in these issues I highly recommend H. Maccoby's The Mythmaker:Paul And The Invention Of Christianity. This book will open your eyes and only begin a life-long study into "what is the truth about Paul?"**

**We find from this simple word study ["convey" in Greek] that although Paul had been a severe if not major persecutor of Yeshua's Church, after his "revelation" Paul braggingly stated that was not willing to confer, to consult, to take into counsel the Jerusalem authorities, or even to "add" to his store of knowledge concerning Yeshua from those who knew him best.**

**This does not sound right, does it?**

**According to this Greek word for "consult" Paul braggingly states in Galatians that he was not willing to lay up more knowledge concerning Yeshua from those who knew him best. He did not seen to need to add to his knowledge of Yeshua other than what he had received on the Damascus road. But more enlightening is the meaning that he was not to put himself in a humbled position of submitting to another or committing to another for the purpose of consulting him in hopes of gaining needed and necessary knowledge concerning Yeshua and Yeshua's gospel. Except for the Damascus road revelation we all know Paul was in direct opposition to Yeshua and had the wrong message. Not only that but Paul did not consult with flesh and blood about the significance of the revelation he had received about his understanding of "revelation of Jesus Christ" (v.12) as a call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. For Paul it was not necessary for him to consult with any man about the meaning of the revelation he had received by Jesus Christ. He had a private interpretation to which he assumed he needed no witness from those he had previously been persecuting. What is most amazing to me is that Paul brags about not needing to go to those who were the apostles before him (v. 17), to those, that is, who remain within the circle of Yeshua's followers who were at that time regarded as the most qualified to give an authoritative interpretation of what he (Paul) had seen on the Damascus road. By the time he did first visit Jerusalem three years had elapsed and the meaning of the "revelation of Jesus Christ" at Damascus had been clearly established "in" Paul without any reference to outside-human-agency, including the Jerusalem Apostles.**

# PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

**Galatians 1:18 states: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him 15 days". Verse 19 states: "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother".**

**Thayer's Greek Lexicon translates "see" in this manner:**

**2477 historeo-**

**1) to enquire into, to examine, to investigate**

**2) to find out, to learn by enquiry**

**3) to gain knowledge of by visiting, used of some distinguished person, to become personally acquainted with, to know face to face**

**Now we see after three years Paul's submission to the Jerusalem Church whereby he traveled to Jerusalem to enquire and find out information which he was lacking about Yeshua. We must understand that Paul probably never met or heard Yeshua teach so his information about him would be shallow indeed. Paul needed to "catch up" especially since he fashioned himself the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul's trip was, according to the Greek word, intended for the sole purpose of gaining information and knowledge of Yeshua by visiting those who knew him best. The word carries the implication of "gaining information" and in this case from those who knew Yeshua best; namely Peter and James.**

**If Paul was so concerned at this stage of his life in asserting his independence from Jerusalem he would hardly have used a word which explicitly acknowledged his own personal indebtedness to Peter for information concerning the "Christ crucified" which he preached.**

**But we have good reason to conclude that Paul's attempt to distance himself from Jerusalem had a much more specific issue in view; namely, his own personal interpretation of the revelation given him on the Damascus road. Understand that Paul was not trying to stand aloof from Jerusalem in respect to everything to do with the new movement. What he wanted to safeguard was quite simply the claim that his basic understanding of the gospel to the Gentiles came direct from God (v. 11-12). It was precisely his understanding of his Apostleship to the Gentiles which he refused so resolutely to attribute to any human authority (v.1). This had been made perfectly clear by Paul in his refusal to confer with the Jerusalem authorities for 3 years following his "revelation".**

**What is important for us to know is that Paul was NOW quite ready, as seen in these passages, to acknowledge his indebtedness to Peter and James for further information concerning the background of Yeshua's ministry while on earth as well as the very beginnings of the new movement centered on the risen Yeshua.**

**That Paul would have had a natural curiosity about this Yeshua who had appeared to him outside Damascus is rather obvious and we can hardly doubt that the fortnight with Peter was largely spent in passing on such information. Paul used his time with Peter, the one who had been closest to Yeshua, to make inquiry, to draw out the sort of information which had not come to him with the apostle-making gospel-giving revelation three years earlier. What I want you to grasp is that after three years we find Paul submissive to the Jerusalem Church but that was to change over the course of the next few years.**

# PAUL'S SECOND VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

**Galatians 2:1-2 states: "Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem….I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before those of repute, lest somehow I was running or had run in vain".**

**The Greek word for "laid" is as follows:**

**394 anatithemai (an-at-ith'-em-ahee);**

**from 303 and the middle voice of 5087; to set forth (for oneself), i.e propound:**

**KJV-- communicate, declare.**

**This is a very interesting word. The word carries the added idea of "declaring and communicating" with the added idea that the person to whom a thing is referred is asked for his opinion. In other words, something is laid before someone for his consideration. Paul is asking for approval of the Jerusalem authorities for the message he has been preaching for the last 14 years! This word carries the idea of submitting to a higher authority an issue which the one making he submission (Paul) was incompetent to resolve on his own. Dear**

**reader what we read here in the Greek is that Paul is submitting to the Jerusalem authorities "his gospel" for their approval. This literally is Paul's acknowledgment that the authority of his gospel depended on Jerusalem's approval.**

**This is of major importance as we again see for over 17 years Paul was preaching "his gospel" without the sanction of the Jerusalem Church! Wow! Let that sink in!**

**During these 17 years Paul has been holding a delicate balance in defining his relations with Jerusalem. On the one hand Paul makes it clear that his second visit took place 17 years after the revelation which had determined and defined for him "his" gospel and Apostleship to the Gentiles. Nothing that happened at such a distance in time from that decisive event could undermine or call in question the direction or significance of his commissioning by God through Jesus Christ. Paul goes out of his way to point out that he went up in accordance with a further revelation thus presumably excluding any suggestion that his visit to Jerusalem was in response to a summons from James and the mother church. Furthermore he calls the Jerusalem leadership "men of repute", a phrase which acknowledges the high standing in which the pillar apostles were held by others, without constituting an endorsement by Paul himself. The use of the last expression in particular reinforces the impression that Paul's choice was designed to characterize the balance between Paul's recognition of the Jerusalem's Apostles' eminence and authority and his even firmer assertion of independence in the authority of his gospel and Apostleship.**

# PAUL DOUBTS THE VALIDITY OF HIS REVELATION…NOW PAY CLOSE ATTENTION

**Let me set the stage for you. Paul had a revelation. Lets face it, revelations are not always easy to understand or comprehend without help from spiritual authorities at times. Paul sought no help for 3 years. Only after three years did Paul consult with the Jerusalem authorities; and then only Peter for 2 weeks where he asks for "information" about the one he preaches in hopes of "filling in the gaps" lacking in his knowledge of Yeshua. Paul then strikes out preaching this revelation for 14 years then has second thoughts as we see from Galatians 2:2. Notice Paul then, after 14 years, makes the rather phenomenal statement in Gal. 2:2: "Lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain" (Gal. 2:2). This clause certainly indicates not only serious doubt by Paul about the truthfulness of what he has been preaching for 14 years but a genuine concern on Paul's part that the success or failure of his missionary work among the Gentiles which depended upon the approval of the Jerusalem Church as well as its head Pastor James. Without a doubt the judgment of the Jerusalem apostles mattered to Paul; an adverse judgment concerning his gospel would have rendered his work past and present ineffective and useless.**

**Answer for yourself: How can Paul in the same breath both assert his independence of the Jerusalem apostles and yet also acknowledge that the effectiveness of his work depended on the approval of his gospel by these same Jerusalem authorities?**

**Paul knew, what few Christians know today, that Jerusalem's refusal to acknowledge all or part of Paul's "gospel message" would render it ineffective.**

**Answer for yourself: Did these Jerusalem authorities and apostles ever give Paul complete approval of his "whole gospel" or would they at the Acts 15 Church Councilcorrect many parts of it and command Paul upon his return to Asia Minor to make sure that his churches under his tutelage be taught the truth in certain areas which at that time because of Paul they did not possess? These things will be searched out in future articles so stay tuned?**

# YET...PAUL WAS CORRECT IN SOME THINGS

**Let me say at this point that one of the things Paul had been preaching was correct. Paul had been preaching**

**that the non-Jewish believers in God, who accepted the Covenant of Noah along with the Laws of Noah, through the ministry of Yeshua and his followers, were grafted into the Israel of God without the need of circumcision. Paul was right on this. This is what the whole Galatians epistle is about; not about being "not under the Law, but only the non-Jew not being under the law of CIRCUMCISION as stated in the Covenant and laws of Noah." Christianity possibly has got nothing more incorrect than this, or maybe possibly its Christology.**

**You need to know that the acceptance of the non-Jew without circumcision was not the accepted or established practice of mainline Judaism at this particular time in Israel. Due to the intense Jewish hatred for the non-Jew, the rite of circumcision, given only to the Jew, was imposed upon the non-Jewish male in hope of providing an effective deterrent to his conversion to Judaism or other types of religious intercourse.**

**Guess what; it was working. Because of this potentially life-threatening procedure upon an adult male who no longer had his mother's antibodies to retard against infections as a child, hundreds of men wishing to draw closer to God died in such procedures. The bigoted Jews, who hated Gentiles because God had consistently used them to punish and persecute Israel for their disobedience to their covenant, were using such procedures to hold the non-Jew at arms length and limit both social and religious intercourse. Under the Laws of Noah, and the Covenant of Noah, which both preceded the Laws of Moses, such requirements were never imposed on the non-Jew. Because of the ministry of Yeshua and his followers such as James, the pastor of the Messianic Church of Jerusalem, and other, major repentance in the direction of Israel in this regard was to be accomplished. Understand however I am speaking only of the Messianic branch of Judaism only; the orthodox Judaism of the 2nd Temple period never relinquished such a requirement upon the non-Jew.**

## BUT UNDERSTAND....PAUL WAS WRONG IN OTHER THINGS

**Having vindicated Paul on this point, it saddens me to say that Paul will defiantly oppose the other mandates of the Jerusalem Council which would come later as mandated by head Pastor James in Acts 15. The casual reading of Acts 15 without background in this area robs today's believer of such knowledge. A little study can show you Paul was wrong and defiant toward the apostles after Acts 15.**

**Because of his defiance to accept other parts of the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah as binding upon the non-Jew, as it had been for Abraham, Paul would distance himself from the Jerusalem Church and begin to tout his "own personal authority" and "his gospel" over against the authority of the Apostles of the mother church. This explains the many examples in his epistles where he defends his "Apostleship" against those of Jerusalem which had problems with Paul and his message.**

**Probably for many of you this is "news" to you…problems with Paul…the Apostle to the Gentiles! My dear one all is not what it appears in the New Testament. If you are acquainted with our ministry we have dealt heavily with the New Testament documents and scrutinized them with the aid of scholarly research to ascertain the truth from the error within them. Such articles as this is the fruit of our labors. This information can be obtained at several websites:**

- **http://web2.airmail.net/bennoah1**
- **http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua**
- **http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com**
- **http://faithofyeshua.faithweb.com**

**Paul's refusal to accept the mandate of the Jerusalem Council would lead to such comments in the New Testament as this one:**

***"But from those reputed to be something-what they once were matters nothing to me; God shows***

***no partiality-the men of repute added nothing to me (Gal. 2:6)".***

**Paul in writing Galatians following the Acts 15 Council would not and did not admit to accepting any requirements as such from the Jerusalem authorities. But as I have shown you James made a ruling and commanded letters be written of the Council's final decision and circulated among the churches in Asia Minor. James is the head of the church and not Paul!**

**These very important "mandates" for the Gentile Churches of Asia should have "added something to Paul". It is one thing for Paul to write in a letter intended for the churches of Galatia that the men of Jerusalem added nothing to his gospel and quite another to say that in front of James and the elders of Yeshua's Church in Jerusalem. When the cat is away the mouse will play! With such insights you should be able to re-read Paul in the New Testament and discern the tension between him and the Jerusalem elders and his self-vindication to the non-Jews of Asia Minor who knew not the decision of the Jerusalem Council. This is so lopsided it is staggering and we as believers took such rhetoric hook line and sinker never questioning what was the dynamics behind some of Paul's self-vindicating statements. You will see how serious this becomes for the non-Jewish believer as we get deeper into the dogmas and doctrines contained in the Jerusalem decree in Acts 15.**

# PAUL'S DILEMMA

**Paul knew that to acknowledge the Jerusalem apostle's overall authority to determine the terms on which the gospel could be received and Gentiles accepted into Israel's Re-Newed Covenant would have jeopardized the Gentile mission if the "Judaizers" in Galatia could have claimed Jerusalem's authority. Yet, at the same time, the pillar apostle's authoritative ruling in Acts 15 (James') was one Paul had to appeal to if his gospel was to be effective and his vision of Gentile converts being brought into the people of God to be fully realized. It was this attempt to hold on to Jerusalem's authority and yet at the same time to hold it at arm's length which explains the great lengths Paul goes to in his epistles to play up his Apostleship and play down the authority of the "pillars" of Jerusalem. Above all else Paul wanted to make it clear that the pillar apostles acknowledged the validity of his circumcision-free gospel to the Gentiles. That was where he wanted his readers to recognize the significance and force of Jerusalem's authority: Titus was not circumcised despite strong advocacy on the part of some that he should be.**

**Paul will tell a blatant lie in Galatians 2:6 when he says: But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: (KJV)**

**Paul will later say "They added nothing, no further content, request, instruction or requirement to the circumcision-free gospel…except the encouragement to remember the importance of almsgiving (Gal. 2:10)".**

**If you keep reading you will see this is a outright lie Paul tells in rebellion to the Jerusalem message he was commanded to communicate with his churches in Asia Minor. Paul will not do it!**

**What Paul writes in Galatians chapter 2 is simply not true. This is where the problem comes in. One only needs to read Acts 15 and James's decree to understand that certain stipulations from the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah were mandated upon non-Jewish believers coming to faith in God, even if through Paul and his ministry. To say these "pillars" added nothing is far from true. It is in these declarations by James that Paul will cast aside when trying to "win souls to Christ". You need to understand that at this point Jerusalem's backing was absolutely crucial to Paul's whole understanding of his gospel and its outworking in his missionary strategy.**

**On the other hand Paul had no desire to lean on Jerusalem's authority more heavily than was absolutely necessary. Hence once again the distancing phrase, "those reputed to be of some account" and its echo three verses later "those regarded as pillars" (Gal. 2:6-9). Notice also the highly revealing parenthesis, "what they once were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality". Here Paul's language indicates clearly enough**

**both at that time the Jerusalem apostles were accorded a status and authority ["what they once were"…notice the imperfect tense] which *is* now a matter of indifference to him [again note the change of tense]. Notice also that in his view the Jerusalem apostles are still accorded too high a status and authority by some-but not by God. If this is not stabbing in the back I don't know what it!**

**It is to these actions of Paul's rebellion and defiance we will investigate in the further articles.**

**In closing of this article let me conclude with this thought. In laying "his" gospel before the Jerusalem apostles what Paul sought was not so much their approval, without which his gospel would have no validity, as their recognition of his gospel's validity, without which his gospel would lose its effectiveness.**

**Paul would gain the apostle's approval for "his" gospel of "no circumcision" for salvation and inclusion of the non-Jewish believer into the Israel of God. What escapes most Christians today is that when reading the Book of Galatians they tend to get the idea Paul opposed all the Law. He did not. It was just for Paul the Laws of Noah and the Laws of Moses were like a salad bar…he would pick this one and reject this one. This is never what God intended for His children, as we said before, one's relationship with God is totally dependent upon one's Covenant and his effort to maintain Covenant stipulations thereby maintaining relationship with God. For the non-Jewish believer, the Christian, this is the Covenant of Noah.**

**More in the next in this series as we look deeply into what the issues were that Paul put aside from the Acts 15 Council and the following incident at Antioch where he makes full breach with the Jerusalem Church. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #3

**In the first two articles in this series I have tried to lay a foundation into the background into what were the dynamics involved as the Antioch incident where the men from James rebuked Peter, Barnabas, and Paul along with his church. These events, when properly understood, hold tons of important information that should be of interest to today's Christian if he truly desires to live a life pleasing to God. Failure to understand the truth behind the skewed pictures of the event in the New Testament guarantees the reader that his life will not prosper from such restored truth and hopefully his repentance in several areas of his life. This will become more apparent as we dig deeper.**

## PAUL'S REVELATION…&…FIRST VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH THREE YEARS LATER

**We have made note previously that when Paul had his "revelation" on the Damascus road, Paul writes (Gal. 1:16-24) that he did not immediately confer with those who had been apostles before him; instead, he went due south to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. Only after three years did he visit Jerusalem for a fortnight's conference with Cephas (Peter); among the apostles he saw only their leaders, Cephas and James the Lord's brother. Presumably in consequence of this meeting he then went to "the regions of Syria and Cilicia," avoiding "the churches of Judaea" even though they had been informed of his conversion and his mission work. Paul implies, and we have no word from the Jerusalem church to state otherwise, that the Jerusalem leaders agreed with him that he should confine his activities to the Gentile mission; at any rate, he was not to work under the direct jurisdiction of Jerusalem or in proximity to it. He also implies that there was no question about the right of the apostles at Jerusalem to govern the churches of Judaea.**

**The church of Jerusalem was the church of the twelve apostles. From I Corinthians 15:5-7 it appears that their jurisdiction was based on appearances of the risen Christ—on the one hand, to Cephas, the Twelve, and a large group of disciples; on the other, to James and to "all the apostles." The list of appearances seems to reflect the combination of two groups of appearances which were especially related to Cephas and to James, and the authority of the Jerusalem church thus rested on a double foundation (Peter and James). Paul's own claim to apostolic authority was obviously parallel not to that of Cephas, who had been a disciple of Yeshua in Galilee and at Jerusalem, but to that of James, a convert only after the resurrection like himself. From the account in Galatians it is by no means clear that Cephas and James recognized Paul's apostolate when he first visited them. Indeed, it looks as if they waited for fourteen years before explicitly recognizing that by divine favor he had been entrusted with the mission to the gentiles (Gal. 2:7-9). If this is so, the leaders of the church of Jerusalem must have enjoyed a primacy greater than Paul not only in Judaea but also among Jews in other areas of the Christian world. Dear one this means that for all Messianic Jewry the Church of Yeshua in Jerusalem was the ONLY authority for the Yeshua's Movement…even in Asia Minor where Paul would go later.**

# FOURTEEN YEARS LATER….PAUL'S SECOND TRIP TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH TO GET THEIR APPROVAL FOR WHAT HE WAS PREACHING

**What happened after fourteen years was that Paul went to Jerusalem from Antioch, taking with him both Barnabas and a Greek convert named Titus. The purpose of the visit was to hold a private conference with the Jerusalem leaders and to set before them Paul's gospel to the gentiles (Gal.2:1-10). The results of this conference were extremely important for the later history of the Pauline mission and of the Christian church. Jewish Christians, under the influence of R. Shammai, continued to advocate the practice of circumcision for non-Jews although it was never required in the Laws of Noah; Paul indignantly rejected it and refused to have Titus circumcised. The leaders of the Messianic Movement within Judaism (church) agreed with Paul's position, and from them he apparently won the definite allocation of spheres of influence described in his letter. According to Paul the "pillar" apostles laid no additional requirements upon him, he says, and they recognized that by divine favor he had been entrusted with the gospel for the gentiles, just as Peter had been given it for the Jews. This statement by Paul is not true and we will see shortly in Acts 16 that there were several "additional requirements" called "necessary and which seemed good to the Holy Spirit by James" which Paul would not do nor agree to. Paul and Barnabas were henceforth to work with gentiles; James, Cephas, and John with Jews. In ratifying this agreement they shook hands with him and also required that he take up a collection in support of the Jerusalem community, presumably thus sealing the concordat. This collection from the non-Jews was evidently analogous to the tax which Jews paid for the support of the temple in Jerusalem.**

# PAUL'S RETURN TO ANTIOCH AFTER THE 2ND VISIT…NOT ALL GOES WELL

**Following Paul's second meeting with the Jerusalem Church following his 14 years absence difficulties arose immediately after Paul's return to Antioch, for the agreement Paul made with the Jerusalem Church was unworkable in communities consisting of both Jews and gentiles. This needs some explanation for you to grasp the hidden political and religious dynamics behind the scenes which prompted the meeting of the Acts 15 First Church Council.**

**Prior to the Acts 15 Council, and follow the revelation to Peter in Acts 10 and 11 where he learned non-Jews were "clean" Peter came to Antioch and at first observed the local Christian custom of eating meals, as a Jew, with Gentiles. Since there were evidently many Jews in the congregation, the more conservative among them presumably informed James, at Jerusalem, that the Jewish Messianic Movement within Judaism (Christianity) was being undermined by Paul and his congregation at Antioch.**

**James sent emissaries to insist that Jews should not eat with Gentiles, and his concern was respected not only by Peter but also by Barnabas and the other Jewish Christians (Gal. 2:11-13). There are many reasons for this repentance on the part of Peter, Barnabas, and other Jews at Antioch when the men from James appeared because as you will see under the teaching of Paul some of the Commandments in the Laws of Moses were being violated at table-fellowship with non-Jews as well as some of the Laws from the Covenant of Noah which pertained to these same non-Jews. In other words, in the effort "to become all things to all men" Paul had compromised many Commandments and the men from James would not let these breaches of Law pass nor such disobedience to the Word of God for expediency sake.**

**Answer for yourself: Why would James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem Church, command Jewish believers not to continue to eat with non-Jewish believers?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that non-Jewish believers were sinning when they were eating and sharing**

**table fellowship with the Jews, and in doing so tempting the Jews to follow in their sinful ways? Yes!**

**Answer for yourself: It is possible that at table fellowship in Antioch, between Jewish believers and non-Jewish believers, that important parts of the Laws of Noah from the Covenant of Noah, which were binding upon all non-Jewish believers, were being violated by Paul and the practice of his churches?**

**Answer for yourself: Had Paul justified the "breaking" and "bending" of these Noahide Covenant requirements and Laws in the hopes of "becoming all things to all men that he might win some"? He sure did. And the Christian Church today, under this same Covenant of Noah, sadly follows in the same footsteps and is not aware. This is the reason what the men from James continually dogged him in the New Testament everywhere he went. Paul's persecutions and "beatings" recorded in the New Testament are not from some stray Jews, they were not from "thugs"; rather it was from "brothers" from the Jerusalem Church who had been given a mandate by Yeshua before his ascension to teach all nations (Gentiles) to observe certain things (many of these things Paul would treat as if they did not exist or apply). These persecutions were simply the result of Paul violating the teachings of Yeshua and the Torah. But without a deep understanding of what comes next in these articles it is so easy to read Paul's accounts and feel sorry for him when we should be enraged against him. Paul defends himself by calling these righteous men who held up such standards of righteousness "Judaizers". Growing up in the church this term always had a "bad" connotation when in truth it is these "Judaizers" who were closest to Yeshua and were not compromising the Commandments of God like Paul and others. You can see how Paul literally blasphemes those keeping the Torah and relegates them all with the negative term "judaizers."**

**Along with this question we must factor in what we have already learned from the previous articles. Let me summarize:**

- **Paul was desperately attempting to justify himself after being spurned by the Chief Priest over his daughter. This material can be sent upon request as it fills in many gaps in the understanding of the motives of Paul.**
- **Remember again this is primarily due to Paul being a Gentile who converted to Judaism and such a one was "not good enough" for the Chief Priest's daughter, even after conversion.**
- **Coupled with this, after Paul's defection from the Sadducees and profession of Pharisee beliefs, was the tension created by needing the acceptance and authority of the Jerusalem Church in order to give credibility to his Gentile mission. Paul's prior persecution of the Messianic Movement while being part of the Temple police force as a Sadducee did not help in the matter as well.**

**At this point Paul could see that his own mission to the Gentiles was being endangered. Paul was literally trying to build a name for himself and promote his authority which had been rejected by both the Sadducees and the Pharisees. He had successfully claimed during his trip following his 14 year absence that circumcision was not to be required of Gentiles (never required in the Covenant of Noah), but if the Jewish dietary laws were to be observed, as thought by Paul, even by Jews in a mixed community, then both "freedom in Christ Jesus" (Gal.2:4) and the unity of the churches would be destroyed in Paul's estimation. Paul's ideas conflict with the Torah. The Jews were commanded to observe such Commandments forever (like kosher). There was no getting around this issue for a Jew and any table fellowship with non-Jews (take Antioch for example) would involve such issues. When the men from James came to the Antioch congregation they saw that at table fellowship between Jews and non-Jews that several breaches of the Covenant of Moses and the Laws of Noah were not being observed. Understand that such Laws of Noah are reiterated at Sinai and find their identity in the Laws of Moses as well.**

# A ONE-SIDED DEFENSE OF AN INDEFENSIBLE POSITION

**Paul was caught red-handed if I might say so. He had two options:**

- **Repent and confess and return to the dictates of the Laws of Noah for his followers…or**

- **Write a defense of his position and propagate it to other non-Jews who would know no better since lacking background in the Laws and Covenant of Noah.**

**It is not hard to see what occurred. Now read Galatians and Romans and you will begin to see through the charade. Paul therefore denounced Peter's action of repentance from violating kosher food laws when accused by the men from James and it is recorded for us completely different in that he asked him, "If you as a Jew live in gentile, not Jewish, fashion how can you compel the Gentiles to practice Judaism?" Unfortunately he does not report Peter's answer. But Peter's and Barnabas' actions give us their answer. After being reminded of their Covenant obligations and how they had broken and compromised them both Peter and Barnabas, according to Paul, they both left Paul's fellowship and the church moved next door! The New Testament only records the biased view from Paul's perspective but as I have showed you he was wrong and the men from James was right. Even Peter and Barnabas were taken away by such liberal compromise in the efforts to "win some". The Christian Church is guilty of the same today!**

**If the standards are lowered then it would be much easier to gain followers; thus bolstering Paul's reputation and authority. But the men from James, as well as James, knew better. This is why the men from Jerusalem was sent to "spy out" the situation at Antioch. At this time, regardless of what Paul would have you think according to his writings, the Jerusalem Church remained highly skeptical of Paul after 14 years. That is why the Jerusalem Church continually "dogged" Paul in every city where he went and reported his every action to the authorities in the Jerusalem Church. That is why Paul would be summoned twice to return to the Mother Church over problems for which he was the instigator. We see that in Acts 15 and Acts 21 where Paul had to report to James. Again we have only a one-sided account in the New Testament whereby he went up by "revelation" but dear one read between the lines once you have the facts.**

## THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT CAUSED THE NEED FOR THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL OF ACTS 15

**The church was in disunity. As you can see one of the principal occasions of disunity within the early Messianic Movement was provided by the conversion and mission of the apostle Paul. An authoritative decision on such matters was necessary if unity was ever to be restored to the Messianic Movement. Such an authoritative decision is reflected in the account of a council at Jerusalem provided in the book of Acts (15:1-35). In many respects the account runs parallel to Paul's narrative in Galatians, but the two stories are basically different. According to Acts, the apostles and presbyters of the Jerusalem church held a public discussion on the question of circumcision. Peter made an address in which he pointed to his own work among Gentiles and insisted that circumcision was unnecessary. Paul and Barnabas described their work. Finally James proposed that, in view of Mosaic precedents [which again you remember many are but reiterations of the Noahide Laws], Gentile converts should be given four requirements based on Leviticus I7-I8. The apostles and elders agreed with James and composed a decree containing his four points. Again the practice of circumcision was "dropped" since it never was required by God in the Covenant of Noah and only enforced upon non-Jews by the School of Shammai as they hated non-Jews and used circumcision as a means to keep non-Jews from coming into religious fellowship with them as they held all non-Jews not worthy of the World to Come.**

## EXAMINATION OF THESE FOUR POINTS….CALLED BY JAMES "NECESSARY" AS WELL AS WHAT "SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST"

**First of all let us look at the text:**

**Acts 15:28-29**

**28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;**

**29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.**

**This is James' decree at the Acts 15 Council which was prompted by the events at the Antioch incident earlier. Take note that the Messianic Community believed it "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" that these things be laid upon the non-Jewish believers. If the non-Jew would take upon himself these obligations and requirements which were ALREADY within the Covenant and Laws of Noah then table fellowship between the Jews and non-Jewish believers would not be a problem as it had been previously.**

**This "apostolic decree" is very important as the first pronouncement made by a Christian synod. Let us never forget that these decrees were over twenty years after the death and resurrection of Yeshua. This was what the Church of Yeshua considered "necessary" to impose upon non-Jewish believers in God.**

**In closing let us not forget that it would be the Apostle Paul who had failed to teach these dogmas and doctrines to his non-Jewish followers and would continue to not teach them after the Acts 15 Council. It is these very issues that would separate Paul from the Jerusalem Church finally in the latter years of his life. Because of Paul's refusal to accept the First Church's Council and their decision Gentile Christianity today stands outside of those things considered "necessary" and "good to the Holy Spirit".**

**It is to these issues we not turn as we try to regather truth long overlooked by Gentile Christianity which God commanded of us and still requires of us. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #4

**As stated previously the "apostolic decree" in Acts 15 referencing the Laws of Noah for non-Jewish believers is a very important since it is the first pronouncement made by a "Christian" synod. We will concern ourselves in the following articles primarily with those concerning table-fellowship between Jew and non-Jew.**

**This first item, abstinence from meats sacrificed to idols, is based on Leviticus 17:8-19 and was understood, at least by Paul (I Cor. 10:28), to refer to foods known to have been consecrated to pagan Gods but not to meals eaten at Temples.**

**The second, abstinence from blood, has to do with the dietary regulations of Leviticus 17:10-12, and was so interpreted later (Eusebius, H.E. 5, 1, 26). At one point, however, Tertullian took it in regard to murder (De pudic. 12, 4-5). So did the Rabbis by the way.**

**The third, abstinence from the meat of animals which had been strangled, without their blood being drained; was an ordinance certainly Jewish in origin (Lev. 17:13-14) and enforced among Jewish Christians (Clem. Hom. 7,8; 8,19; Clem. Rec. 4, 36). This was not discussed by Paul; it is absent from the text of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian.**

**The fourth item, abstinence from "fornication," seems strange in this context, although Paul may refer to it in letters from and to Corinth (1 Thess. 4:3; I Cor. 5:1, 6:13; 7:2). Among Jewish Christians it was referred to rules about marital intercourse and ritual washings (Lev. I8:6-19).**

## THE TAMPERING WITH THE DOCUMENTS BY THE GENTILE CHURCH BEGINS

**By the early second century two versions of James' decree were in circulation. One of them contained the four items listed above; the other omitted any reference to "things strangled" and added the "golden rule" that "whatever they do not wish done to themselves they should not do to others" (cf. Tobit 4:15; Didache 1,2). Witnesses to the third item include both Clement and Origen at Alexandria. The other version was known to Irenaeus and Tertullian, probably also to Theophilus of Antioch (Ad Autol. 2, 34).**

**What this modification indicates is that the decree was seriously regarded as Christian legislation and for this reason was modified later by those who wished to not accept James' decree! This decision from the Jerusalem Church for the non-Jewish believers in Asia Minor was to be transmitted to Antioch and throughout Syria and Cilicia by two Jerusalem "prophets," Judas Barsabbas and Silas, who were to accompany Barnabas and Paul in order to make sure that it was delivered. Later on, we learn that Judas and Silas delivered the decree at Antioch and then returned to Jerusalem (Acts 15:30-33); and Paul went so far as to circumcise the son of a**

**Jewish mother and a Greek father (15:40-16:4). Indeed, Silas accompanied Paul through Asia Minor to Macedonia and Achaea, disappearing from the picture just before Paul's extended stay at Corinth (18:5).**

**The precise extent to which Paul may have regarded such a decree as binding upon Gentile converts—for example, outside Syria and Cilicia—is problematical. He and Silas (Sylvanus) wrote a letter from Corinth, insisting that God wills holiness and specifically referring to "abstaining from fornication" (I Thess. 4:3). Paul does not speak of dietary regulations (for obvious reasons as you will see shortly), but he praises "the churches of God in Judaea in Christ Jesus" as persecuted by the Jews just as the Thessalonians are persecuted by Gentiles ( I Thess. 1:14). It is likely that he had told them of the apostolic decree, for the substance of it seems to appear in I Corinthians. Sections of practical counsel in that letter begin with discussions of "fornication" (5:I, specifically related to Lev. 18:7) and of "meats sacrificed to idols" (8:1). At the same time, it is evident that Paul cannot accept the legal principle underlying the decree. For Paul Christians are not bound by dietary regulations, though they may observe them for the sake of others (10:23-29).**

**1 Cor 10:23-29**

**23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not [how can that be Paul when there are 365 negative Commandments?]**

**24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.**

**25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: [what is this? Might this constitute idolatry for Paul and those who follow his advice?]**

**26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.**

**27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. [what is this? Might this constitute idolatry for Paul and those who follow his advice?]**

**28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: [is Paul more concerned that others might see him break the commandments of God than God seeing him?]**

**29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? (KJV) [since when are you more concerned what men think of you than what God thinks of you Paul….after all did you not say you were not a man-pleaser but a God pleaser?]**

# SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

**Growing up as a Christian you might say as I did "this sounds good to me," however these Pauline suggestions violate Commandments given in the Old Testament in the Laws of Moses and the Covenant of Noah. We will see this in detail as we go on but understand Pauline theology that violates and contradicts the written Commandments of God is sin even if they sound good and are taught by the Christian Church today. Paul's "Christ" never gave him authority to do away with the Commandments of God and you need to face that fact now!**

**If Silas continued to adhere to the Jerusalem regulations, which were no more than the reiteration of the already existing Covenant responsibilities God had given the non-Jew in the Covenant of Noah, it is no wonder that he left Paul at Corinth. According to Acts 21:25, the elders at Jerusalem were still concerned with observance of them when Paul last visited the church there; they had heard that Paul taught—"becoming everything to everyone," as he wrote himself (I Cor. 9:22):**

***1 Cor 9:22 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things***

*to all men, that I might by all means save some. (KJV)*

**The Jerusalem church had even heard that Paul was even teaching and urging Jewish Christians not to observe the law (Acts 21:21):**

*Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)*

**The word "customs" is interesting:**

**1485 ethos- 1) custom 2) usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite**

**The Jerusalem had heard that Paul was teaching "all" the Jews in his mission to not abide by "the law" which for us means the Commandments of God!**

**Yet we find under the authority of James and the Jerusalem church, according to Acts 21:26, that Paul submitted to James' mandate and submitted to the Nazirite vow of consecration (Num. 6:9-20.....oh, by the way, this included blood sacrifices and sin offerings.....and Paul did this over 25 years after Jesus' death which we are told is the last sin offering...THINK?). At Jerusalem, one would suppose, Paul accepted the practices of the church there. He was under Jerusalem jurisdiction.**

**It must be admitted that to try to coordinate Paul's account in Galatians with the "literary" narrative in Acts leads to many difficulties. It is most unlikely that in the long run Paul DID NOT regard the Jerusalem decree as binding upon his converts or himself.**

# THE ANTIOCH DINNER

**If the decree was known at Antioch, problems arose there as soon as Cephas (Peter) visited the city. Swayed by emissaries from James of Jerusalem, Peter withdrew from table fellowship with gentiles and was followed by other Jews, including even Barnabas. Paul insisted that his action was; inconsistent and irresponsible (Gal. 2:11-I4).**

**To be sure, the question of infringement as to authority arose in many of the provinces where Paul had previously maintained control over them not only by personal visits but also by writing letters and by sending his lieutenants especially Timothy and Titus, to them. At Corinth, he speaks of others as proclaiming "another gospel" (2 Cor. 11:4), using the same language as that employed in the Galatian controversy (Gal. 1:6-9). Ironically those whom Paul accuses of preaching another Gospel are the Apostles and the Jerusalem church and the Christian Church has missed this, maybe on purpose, for two thousand years!**

**This is the irony that I wish to expose to you. But not following through by upholding James' decree along with the mandate of the Jerusalem Church Paul caused those he taught along with his churches to be in violation of many of the dogmas contained in the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah.**

**Being so far removed today we find Gentile Christianity no better off in this regard and a strong rebuke and call to repentance is needed. It is to these issues we now turn.**

**It is our prayerful hope that you, upon examining these articles, will make the necessary corrections in your religious belief system and conduct before God. Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #5

**The incident at Antioch, briefly described by Paul in Galatians 2, has long been a source of some perplexity to students of the New Testament. This has become possibly more evident to you since reading the first four articles in this series. In the patristic period the embarrassment of an account recorded in the New Testament where Paul openly condemned Peter for hypocrisy was avoided by such devious exegesis as that of Clement of Alexandria who maintained that a different Cephas was in view, or that of Origen who argued that the whole dispute between Peter and Paul was "simulated."**

**Answer for yourself: What really went on in this incident at Antioch which is recorded in the New Testament from Paul's view only, and is it trustworthy? How can we be sure Paul's view as presented in the New Testament is correct?**

**Answer for yourself: Are there any other sources to illuminate this incident outside the New Testament, and do they confirm Paul's viewpoint or do they bring it into question?**

**Answer for yourself: What if you were to find that Paul's "viewpoint" is a gross distortion of the facts of the matter and in reality both Peter and Paul were BOTH rebuked by the men from James as the ambassadors of Yeshua's church?**

**Answer for yourself: Why would James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem Church, command Jewish believers not to continue to eat with non-Jewish believers?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that non-Jewish believers were sinning when they were eating and sharing table fellowship with the Jews, and in doing so tempting the Jews to follow in their sinful ways?**

**Answer for yourself: It is possible that at table fellowship in Antioch, between Jewish believers and non-Jewish believers, that important parts of the Laws of Noah from the Covenant of Noah, which were binding upon all non-Jewish believers, were being violated by Paul and his churches?**

**Answer for yourself: What if you were to find that it was Peter and Barnabas, Paul's close traveling companions, who were the ones to repent after the rebuke from the Jerusalem Church and that it was Paul who defiantly resisted the mother church's instruction?**

## WHAT IS TRUTH?

**Dear reader I will prove to you as we conclude this series of articles on the incident at Antioch that Paul's defiance to conform to the Church's mandate is masked in the New Testament and is recorded in a distorted one-sided account in Galatians 2. Without these facts that I will show, the casual reader of**

**the New Testament reads this "one-sided" pro-Pauline account and arrives at the wrong conclusion concerning the matter. One will read Paul's self-defense in his epistle and be led to believe Paul is right and that Peter and Barnabas is wrong. You must remember that this event at Antioch occurred after the cross of Christ and the decision brought from the Jerusalem Church is the dogma and doctrine that was to enforced on both Jew and non-Jew long after Yeshua's resurrection. That brings a lot of weigh to what the Jerusalem Church taught and SHOULD matter to Christians as the followers of this "Christ" today.**

**We need to LISTEN to what the Apostles said in this matter which was in reality both a rebuke to Peter, Barnabas, and Paul as well. We have no letters from Peter and Barnabas on this issue that has survived and only have Paul's account which is definitely one-sided. Let us examine other materials which have survived which paint an entirely different picture of the matter and exposes the truth which is a direct contradiction of Paul's account. Millions of Christians read the account of Paul's slander of the "Judaizers" and "false brethren" of which Paul speaks; never knowing that Paul is referring to the "pillars" from the Jerusalem Church in Galatians chapter 2 and are led to believe that Paul is right, never knowing that those he attacks and slanders are the Jerusalem Apostles who knew Yeshua best and walked with him for 40 days following his resurrection. Sadly the other side of the coin is not presented in the New Testament but believe me it does exist. So in the light of the fact that the Roman Church, wishing to promote Gentile religion over Biblical and Jewish faith, did not include both accounts of the incident at Antioch when they put the New Testament together. So what else is new? I will, and it is my hope that our readership will understand that this issue at Antioch goes to the very heart of the Olive Tree of Israel and how the non-Jew is to relate to the people of God.**

# LOOKING AT GALATIANS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

## Gal 2:1-16

**1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.**

**2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.**

**3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:**

**4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:**

**5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.**

**6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:**

**7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;**

**8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)**

**9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.**

**10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.**

***11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.***

***12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.***

**13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.**

**14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?**

**15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,**

**16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

**First of all you need to know that when the men from James came to Antioch they rebuked not only Paul, but Peter and Barnabas as well for violating their Covenant and its Covenant Laws! Not only that, but the non-Jews as well as they had been led to compromise their Covenant responsibilities under God according to the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah! Paul is right in saying that before the men from James arrived Peter did eat with the Gentiles and it was this compromise at Jew-Gentile table fellowship which violated Covenant Laws. It will become more apparent as we proceed which Laws were violated and are yet violated today.**

**What I want you to notice in the beginning is Paul' testimony that Peter repented (along with Barnabas) and withdrew and separated himself from eating with the Gentiles which had been taught wrong by Paul. They left Paul's fellowship and moved the church next door!**

***This occurred after the Cross of Christ and is a major statement on how the Church of Yeshua understood how they, the people of God, were to relate and accept the non-Jew into fellowship within Yeshua's church.***

**Answer for yourself: What has changed since then?**

**Answer for yourself: Should we not listen to what the ambassadors from Yeshua's Church have to say about how we, non-Jewish believers in God through the ministry of Yeshua, are to be "accepted" in the church of Yeshua?**

**Answer for yourself: If when listening to the message of the "men from James" we find that we as non-Jewish believers in God, have not "separated" ourselves from the very same activities that we encounter in the Antioch incident, are we then truly "accepted" by God although we feel accepted by our "denominational churches"?**

**Answer for yourself: Do our denominational churches today have greater authority than the "men from James", and if you believe they do, then where do you find that they get it?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible we have lost the true message of Yeshua and his followers after 1700 years of Gentile control of the Church of Yeshua?**

**Answer for yourself: How much has this "one-sided" account of Paul, among many others, as presented in the New Testament, prevented you from learning the truth about how Yeshua's Church would have accepted or rejected you into the people of God twenty years after Yeshua's death?**

**Answer for yourself: How does it feel to realize that you might be in good standing with your Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, or your Catholic Church, but in Heaven not accepted by God in His assembly (Yeshua's Church)**

**because you are yet guilty of the same conduct as were the Galatian non-Jews and you don't know it? Serious questions I must say!**

## IS ANY OF THIS MAKING SENSE TO YOU YET?

**Answer for yourself: Can we assume that Peter accepted Paul's rebuke and amended his conduct? Or is the truth closer that Peter and Barnabas accepted the men from James' rebuke and altered their conduct and that Paul's defiance is cloaked in a supposed "rebuke" of Peter and Paul' later self-defenses in the Book of Galatians and Romans? Sadly millions trust this New Testament document for Divine truth when it can be shown to be "fixed" in hundreds of places. We have lost so much due to anti-Semitism and the Roman Church and "their documents: http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the actual conduct that was "exposed" that caused Peter and Barnabas and the Gentile followers of Paul to repent and leave Paul's fellowship in Galatia?**

**Answer for yourself: What was the dynamics that would later cause Paul to say in 2 Tim 1:15: "thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia (a whole continent) be turned away from me (Paul)"? READ THAT AGAIN!**

**Answer for yourself: If Peter did not did not heed Paul but the men from James, what does that tell us about the development of Paul's missionary work, about his subsequent relations with Jerusalem and Peter, about factions within first-century Christianity (Peter and Paul parties, etc.)?**

**Answer for yourself: Did you ever stop to think that it was the Jerusalem Church and the Apostles which were responsible for Paul's troubles to which he refers constantly? Any wonder why "the Jews" are painted in such a negative light as if they did not know any better?**

**Dear one these issues were first raised in their present sharp from by the work of F. C. Baur, Paul: His Life and Works (1845); ET 2 vols: London/Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1873). I learned of this in Seminary as we spent 2 minutes on it. I, being inquisitive, later investigated this on my own. It seemed important to me and hopefully you understand the immense repercussions that such knowledge can make if one has it. This is not new material only materials that you have NOT yet been exposed to as of yet. The New Testament presents one perspective; I assure you that opposing this "one view" is the testimony of Moses, the Prophets, and even Jesus that assures us that the Law and Covenants of God have not passed away in spite of what other "self-appointed" authorities of God might say. For centuries men have seen behind the deception of Galatians 2 and Paul's rebuke of Peter and it is time you do as well.**

## WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE TABLE-FELLOWSHIP THAT CAUSED THE PAULINE AND PETER SPLIT?

**Answer for yourself: Again, where does the Antioch incident fit within the history of that period?**

**Answer for yourself: Can we assume that it formed the impetus to the Jerusalem council recounted by Luke in Acts 15?**

**Answer for yourself: Or is the issue more complex, with the historicity of Acts being called in question in part at least by Paul's account?**

**For all that the significance of the Antioch incident has been recognized in many such discussions, there has been remarkably little detailed work done on the incident itself. The question of whether or not Galatians 2.1-10 is an accurate portrayal of Acts 15 has been overlooked my many. And when commentators or historians have moved on to the Antioch incident they have not paused long over what must on any reckoning be a crucial question: What was the nature of the table-fellowship that Peter enjoyed with the Gentile believers?**

**Answer for yourself: What was involved in this table-fellowship which was so unacceptable to the men from James?**

**Answer for yourself: What precisely did he withdraw from when the men from James arrived?**

# EXISTING TABLE FELLOWSHIP OF THE JEW AND NON-JEW AT ANTIOCH

**The ready assumption by most is that the whole Antioch incident was all simply a matter of the Jewish food laws and little more need be said. But was it quite so simple? Is this not another exegetical assumption which ought to be examined more closely? Without some clearer idea of what table-fellowship at Antioch involved prior to Peter's withdrawal, our grasp of what was at stake is seriously defective, and consequently also our ability to assess the significance of Peter's and Paul's conduct. You need to understand that the issues involved at table fellowship at Antioch involved commandments and conduct described in the Laws of Noah. The Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah is the Covenant whereby the non-Jew finds his standing before God! If the non-Jew converts to Judaism then he "moves up" so to speak, but Covenant relationship with God is determined by how one fulfills his Covenant responsibilities! It was these Commandments given by God to all non-Jews long before the Laws of Moses which Paul had compromised and was teaching others to do the same. Thus the consternation of the Jerusalem church over this incident and Paul.**

**At that time of the Antioch incident many of these "Commandments" given to the non-Jew as seen expressed in various "conducts" had been relaxed by Paul to his church and even Peter and Barnabas had been "taken in" by such violations of these Commandments in the name of "winning souls". God was not pleased that His Commandments were violated and broken in the name of "ministry" and such goes on today almost everywhere today in the Christian Church which has forsaken Judaism and the non-Jew's relationship to God within it. Instead, the Gentile Church "created another way" and walks in it today; never questioning is if "this new way" is accepted by God. The horror of such actions is masked by documents altered from the "original truths" once held by the Jerusalem Church and the Apostles, let alone Yeshua.**

**It is toward this area and aspect that I wish to focus in what follows. My belief that such an investigation is necessary is the product of reflection on several overlapping and wider issues, a reflection stimulated by various items of recent scholarship. The overlapping and wider issues inform us of the broader historical context within which we must attempt to assess if we are truly to understand the Antioch incident and will engage our attention in future articles in this series. In the light of our findings there we will attempt some exegesis of Galatians 2.11-18 in the hope of clarifying the incident itself, including the reasons for Peter's conduct and the force of Paul's response. Finally we shall consider possible implications for some of the more familiar questions connected with this passage.**

**Now let us continue on to deeper matters that will reflect on the non-Jew's relationship or lack of relationship with Yeshua's Church as seen from the eyes of the men from Jerusalem which reflect the mandate of the head Pastor of Yeshua' Church…James the Righteous…Yeshua's brother.**

**Shalom.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #6

## THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT SURROUNDING THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT

**The Antioch incident is usually dated in the late 40s of the first century, depending of course on such questions as the date of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15) and the relation between Galatians 2 and Acts 15. Scholars usually date anywhere between 43 C.E. and 51 C.E, but the majority of scholars prefer 48 C.E. or 49 C.E. as the most probable date (R. Jewett, Dating Paul's Life [Philadelphia: Fortress/London: SCM, 1979,1-2]. Since the crisis at Antioch was provoked by the arrival of "certain individuals from James" (Gal. 2.12), that is, from Jerusalem, it is important to clarify the relationship between the church in Jerusalem and the church in Antioch at that time, and to examine possible influences on these churches from the broader social and political situation within Palestine and within Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism. But for our further study you need to understand that most likely the Antioch Incident occurred in the late 40's and it was the impetus for the acts 15 Jerusalem Council which was quickly to follow in 48-49 C.E. It would be at this time and at this council that dogma would be decided that would determine how the non-Jew was to be "included" in the Olive Tree of Israel without complete conversion to Judaism. Dear one, this "Jerusalem decree" is the binding and loosing the Bible teaches about in the Old Testament and legally binding with God and His representatives regardless of what your particular denominational by-laws decree today. This is where most Christians miss it. They can be in good standing with their Pastor and Church today but totally disobedient to the Heavenly decree of James and the Jerusalem Church and not know it because they lack the necessary information about what truly went on with Peter, Paul, and the men from James.**

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

**One of the major weaknesses in many reconstructions of Christian origins and New Testament theology has been the failure to grasp the full racial and nationalistic dimensions of the early disputes within Christianity. As K. Stendahl pointed out in a famous essay, The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West, Harvard Theological Review 56 (1963) 199-215), Paul's teaching on justification through faith was not intended as an answer to a Luther-like agonizing after personal assurance of salvation. Paul's concern was rather with the relation between Jew and Gentile. *His question was not, How can I be saved?, but, How can Gentiles be included within the messianic community of Israel?***

**You most likely need to read the above statement again.**

**If you can you need to procure for yourself K. Stendal's Paul Among Jews And Gentiles And Other Essays**

**(Philadelphia: Fortress/London: SCM, 1976).**

**Stendal brings out clearly that this essentially racial or nationalistic concept of righteousness as a consequence of God's election of and covenant with Israel. This concept is further illuminated and received fresh illumination from the major study by E. P. Sanders with his characterization of Palestinian Judaism in terms of 'covenantal nomism' (Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison Of Patterns Of Religions (London: SCM, 1977). The heart of the book and Sanders' message is so needed to be heard by the Christian Church today.**

***Sanders teaches that one's place in God's plan is established on the basis of the covenant and that the covenant requires as the proper response of man his obedience to the covenant's commandments, while providing means of atonement for transgression (p. 75). One's intention and effort to be obedient constitutes the conditions of remaining in the covenant (p. 180).***

**This at first might not sound alarming but when you study our series of articles on the Christian and his covenant, and see how the New Testament has misrepresented the "new" or "renewed" covenant which has not occurred according to the Prophet Jeremiah regardless of what the unknown writer of the book of Hebrews attest, then one should be rather scared at the implications of such facts.**

**You can read all the Essene materials you want and see they thought themselves representatives of this "New Covenant" since they rejected Judaism in toto and the Temple-Priesthood. Don't look now, but if you are really familiar with their writings they are totally discredited as "falsehoods" since their prophecies failed and this relegates them to an ever growing company of "false teachers" according to the Torah. You need to learn the truth about the Essenes and their "New Covenant," because when they converted in mass to the Jesus movement following Yeshua's death, they brought their "New Covenant" theology with them. They simply were wrong as history attests! Their writings are equally wrong and is little more than apocalytpic star-wars religion. Read some good books on them; take L. Schiffman's Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls to get an accurate picture of how reliable their writings were and if they are to be trusted and believed today.**

**The Christian today literally stands apart from God without a Covenant in force for he is either ignorant of or rejects the only Covenant God gave to him. Being totally ignorant of the Covenant God made with the non-Jew and its stipulations and responsibilities placed upon the non-Jewish believer, he is unable to recognize and fulfill its obligations. No intention or effort is made at all to remain in a Covenant that you are not aware your in. One needs only to look at the anti-Semitism of the Catholic Church for the last 1800 years and how it influenced the writing and collection of the New Testament to understand how such truths were lost. If you want this series to see the horrible facts for themselves let us know. Now back to the Antioch incident.**

**The point you need to see and understand is this: that earliest Christianity was not yet seen as something separate and distinct from Judaism. It was a sect, like other sects within first-century Judaism. The first Christians had some distinct and peculiar beliefs about Yeshua; but their religion was the religion of the Jews! This important and forgotten aspect needs to be researched by every Christian alive today. Let me suggest you begin your study by reading L.H. Schiffman, "At the Crossroads: Tannaitiac Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism", Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Vol. II, Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period (ed. E. P. Sanders; London: SCM Press 1981) 115-156.**

**What the Christian Church must come to understand is that when Gentiles began to embrace these particular beliefs about Yeshua the question raised was still only in terms of what requirements were necessary for Gentiles to join themselves to the people who worshipped the one God. Historically the question was not "have you asked Yeshua into your heart?", "have you accepted the blood of Yeshua for your sin?", or "do you believe in Yeshua?" You might be amazed to find that these questions which seen to fill our pulpits today had no relevancy to the earliest Church of Jerusalem because such theologies had not yet been attached to Yeshua's life and death by his followers. Owing to Paul's teaching on these issues, and his drawing from mystery religions much of this teaching which he only reiterates to the non-Jews already familiar with such "beliefs," such will basically become the message and fruit of the non-Jewish Churches after the destruction of the Temple in 70**

**C.E. in the vacuum caused by the absence of the Jewish Authorities. The Gentiles would draw upon their prior pagan concepts of salvation and apply them to Yeshua. Since the canonization of the New Testament was entirely a Gentile endeavor it is not surprising that such traditions survive today as written in and among the scattered truths about Yeshua in the New Testament.**

**Contrary to what you have heard or even read in the forged New Testament, a Roman creationism, Paul's main argument in Galatians is about how one becomes Abraham's offspring, heir of his blessing (Gal. 3—4) and not how a non-Jew is "saved". As I will show you as we go along, circumcision was only one aspect of that debate concerning the Gentile's inclusion into the Israel of God, and it was probably the incident at Antioch which helped sharpen the issues for Paul as well as the Jerusalem Church.**

**Now something else that is of major importance when viewing the New Testament. This nationalistic dimension (Jew-Gentile relationship and table-fellowship) to the earliest development of Christianity within Judaism also helps us to recognize that the church at Antioch would not have seen itself as an entity independent of the Jews or of the Jewish believers in Palestine. It was simply the believing Jewish community at Antioch embracing more and more God-fearing Gentiles. The fact that the new movement was first given a distinctive name in Antioch (Christians-Acts 11:26) need not imply a distinction between the new movement and the synagogue, but only a distinction within Judaism. The absence of any mention of hostility from synagogue authorities in Antioch against the "Christians" in any of our sources is to be understood as very significant! This means that the first non-Jewish believers in God through the ministry of the followers of Yeshua understood that they were a part of Biblical Judaism and were now included in the Israel of God and not a part of something "new" and "different" as apart from Judaism! This is a major statement with profound consequences to the Christian Churches today. They did not consider themselves a "new" denomination!**

**Almost certainly the majority at heart would simply think of themselves as part of the Diaspora, with Jerusalem still serving as a source of pride and inspiration and a focus for faith and aspirations - despite the persecution which had forced many of the founding members to flee from the capital city (Acts 11.19-20). Stephen's views as represented in Acts 7 should not be understood as calling for an abandoning of Judaism. On the contrary they can be readily understood as a recall to a more primitive and purified form of Judaism. This would also involve the church at Antioch recognizing the church at Jerusalem as the fountainhead of their distinctive faith (cf. Rom. 15.27) and probably also as the authoritative interpreter of it. This is why when the men from James appeared and rebuked the church which had been taught its own version of Pauline Christianity, the church repented. The Jews removed themselves from table fellowship which included meats sacrificed to idols, meats that had not been tithed of correctly, and although not given to non-Jews, they non-Jewish believers took upon themselves the commandments concerning meats which had not been killed rabinically according to Commandments concerning how the blood was to be drained from the meat before eating. This was given to Jews and if non-Jews were to share table-fellowship then this would have to be observed by them as well. All these issues are dealt with in the Laws of Noah. The failure of the Church of Antioch to adhere to these Commandments affected not only the non-Jew since they were included in the Laws of Noah but the Jews as well as they again were included in the Laws of Moses. And the Church at Antioch and its failure to observe such "necessary" things which "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" can be traced to Paul's leadership; or should I say lack of leadership! Later we will look at each of these issues in detail.**

# WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO ME…A NON-JEWISH BELIEVER TODAY?

**This means we today must listen to Jerusalem before we listen to Paul and Antiochian echoes. Sadly the Christian Church of today has it just backwards and this explains the mess we have in the world today which is the direct result of Gentile Christianity's theology of grace without Law. In other words the problems we find today in the Christian World are directly traceable to the Antiochian influence over the Jerusalem influence. It was never meant to be this way but such is the fruit of the anti-Semitism of the Gentile juggernaut called the**

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**Christian Church since the 3rd century.**

# PAUL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE JERUSALEM CHURCH BEFORE THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT…PAUL IN THE BEGINNING WAS DEPENDENT UPON JERUSALEM

**Most significant here is the degree to which Paul's treatment of his own relations with Jerusalem prior to the Antioch incident reinforces the impression that up until the incident over "table-fellowship" at Antioch Paul too had taken it for granted that Jerusalem had this primacy and authority. I refer to the character of Paul's self-defense in Galatians 1-2. Prior to this event Paul was in the middle so to speak. He wanted his Gentile followers to see his "independence" from the authority of Jerusalem but yet was depended upon Jerusalem's recognition for the validity of his mission and his authority among the Gentiles. The dialectic between being independent of and being acknowledged by Jerusalem and James is the keynote of this important text and must not be forgotten. If this is news to you I suggest you read B. Holmberg's Paul and Power: the Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles.**

**In Galatians Paul is writing AFTER the incident at Antioch, after his rebuke by the men of James, and after the Jerusalem Council which reaffirmed the Laws of Noah, and his antagonist exposition toward "law" is heavily colored by that later viewpoint. But in trying to assert his independence from Jerusalem, and the directness of his Apostleship and gospel from Christ, he cannot escape the fact that previously he had readily acknowledged the authority of the Jerusalem apostles. We have by Paul's own hand his testimony in Gal. 1:18 that "after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days." Peter, the apostle who knew Yeshua best, was sought out as well as James, Yeshua's brother by Paul. Later in the same epistle we have Paul's admission again in 2:1: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And ….communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain".**

**Let me show you how Paul was dependent upon the Jerusalem Church, at least at first before he will later break away from the Apostolic decrees made at the Acts 15 Council. In Gal. 1:16 Paul states that he "conferred" not with flesh and blood in the beginning following his revelation but would do so three years later.**

**4323 prosanatithemi-**

**1) to lay upon in addition to**

**2) to lay upon oneself in addition**

**a) to undertake besides**

**b) to put oneself upon another by going to him,**

**c) to commit or to betake oneself to another for the purpose of consulting him**

**d) to consult, to take one into counsel**

**e) to add from one's store**

**3) to communicate, to impart**

**Paul's use of the word "prosanatithemi" (to consult in order to be given an authoritative interpretation) in 1.16 is an implicit acknowledgment that the Jerusalem apostles were recognized by him at that time as the appropriate authorities to consult on the interpretation of the revelation given him at Damascus - the point (as he now insists) being that he had not consulted them (1:16-17). He does not disguise the fact that his first visit to**

**Jerusalem had been 'to get information from Cephas' in Gal. 1:18), though the information was evidently something different from the gospel already received three years earlier through the revelation of Christ (1:12). The purpose of his second visit to Jerusalem was to consult the Jerusalem leadership about "his" gospel, but he does not hide the fact that what they thought or decided about his gospel would make all the difference to the success or failure of his mission to the Gentiles. The point is not that Paul's gospel might be judges invalid, but that it's effect among the Gentiles might be nullified. So without a doubt one can see Paul yielding to Peter, James, and the Jerusalem Church in both of his visits. This means that Paul was in subjection to the Jerusalem authorities from Yeshua's Church and this is the way it should be. Sadly all this would change later after the Antioch incident.**

**The language Paul uses in Gal. 2.2 and 2:6 indicates a certain embarrassment at this admission. He calls the Jerusalem apostles "the men of repute", a phrase familiar in political rhetoric, where it was used both positively and negatively. The parenthesis of verse 6, with its noticeable change of tense - 'what they were (then) is (now) a matter of indifference to me; God shows no partiality' - is all aimed at curtailing the authority of the Jerusalem apostles in the current situation in Galatia and at reducing the significance of his earlier acceptance of that authority (D.M.Hay, "Paul's Indifference to Authority", JBL 88 (1969) 37-8; Betz, Galatians 94-95). Likewise when he says "those of repute added nothing to me" (2.6), there again the language indicates an acknowledgment on his part at that time of Jerusalem's 'right' to instruct or give directives to its daughter churches. So too, it can plausibly be argued that Paul's convoluted statement in verses 7-10 is a further attempt to obscure the degree to which Paul had been willing to accept Jerusalem's authority at that time as clearly expressed in the pillar apostles' recognition of Paul's and Barnabas' missionary success and their approval of a future division of labor (Bruce, Paul, 154, and Betz, Galatians, 96-103). All this points strongly to the conclusion that while Paul defended a position at Jerusalem, the three 'pillar' apostles delivered a verdict.**

**Moreover, there is a growing agreement on the view that when Paul went up to Jerusalem this second time it was not as an independent missionary or apostle, but as a delegate from the church at Antioch (so Acts 15:2; cf. 14:4, 14 - 'apostles', that is, of the church at Antioch, 13:2-3). The question discussed at the meeting in Jerusalem was not primarily whether Paul (and Barnabas) were apostles, but whether as apostles of Antioch their practice of not circumcising their converts should continue - that is, whether the church of Antioch's practice of according full acceptance to uncircumcised Gentile believers should continue without modification. The victory or rather concession won by the Antioch delegation did not call in question the authority of the Jerusalem apostles to make this concession. The point is that the church at Antioch could not make this decision by themselves, and readily referred it to Jerusalem. And when subsequently the delegation came from James, the majority of believers in Antioch just as readily accepted the authority of this further ruling regarding the practice of table-fellowship at Antioch. Paul would not and this is where the problem comes into play which would cause the quick meeting of the Acts 15 Church Council to settle the matter.**

**This nationalistic dimension to the Antioch incident becomes still more significant in the light of the second feature of the broader historical context to which we now turn.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #7

## WHAT MOTIVATED THE MEN FROM JAMES TO REBUKE PETER, BARNABAS, AND PAUL OVER EATING WITH GENTILES?

**During the period which concerns us, many Jews, no doubt a growing proportion within the Jewish territories, must have believed their distinctive religious and national prerogatives were under increasing threat. The long, drawn out crisis provoked by Caligula's insistence that a statue of himself be set up in the Jerusalem temple is well known (AD 40). And later, after the death of Agrippa in AD 44, the situation deteriorated rapidly under a succession of weak Roman procurators. Cuspius Fadus (AD 44-46) demanded that the vestments of the High Priest be returned to the Romans for safe-keeping (Josephus, Antiquities 20.1.1 §6) and had to act against the threatened rebellion led by the self-styled prophet Theudas (Antiquities 20.5.1 §§97-9). Tiberius Julius Alexander (AD 46-48) crucified James and Simon, the sons of Judas the Galilean, presumably because, like their father, they were engaged in fomenting unrest against Roman rule on account of its threat to their faith (Antiquities 20.5.2 §102). Under Cumanus (AD 48-52) things went from bad to worse, with a near riot in Jerusalem resulting in thousands of deaths (20,000 or 30,000 according to Josephus - Jewish War 2.12.1 §§223-7; Antiquities 20.5.3 §§105-12), and a succession of disorders involving zealot bands in Samaria and elsewhere (Jewish War 2.12.2-5 §§228-38; Antiquities 20.5.4-6 §§11-24). Josephus reports that "from that time the whole of Judea was infested with bands of brigands" (Antiquities 20.6.1 §124) - 'brigands' being Josephus' way of describing the Zealots."**

## INTENSIFIED NATIONALISM AND THE PUSH TO REMAIN SANCTIFIED KEPT THE JEWS APART FROM GENTILES

**The followers of Yeshua within Palestine would not have been unaffected by these mounting pressures. The death of Stephen and the subsequent persecution (early or middle 30s) presumably had the effect of ensuring that those followers of the Nazarene who had been exempted from the persecution, or who had returned to Jerusalem thereafter, would take care to show themselves good Jews, loyal to their religious and national heritage. Agrippa's execution of James (brother of John) in or before AD 44 is presumably also to be explained against this background; Luke notes that 'it pleased the Jews' and encouraged Agrippa to move against Peter (Acts 12.1-3).**

**Furthermore, we should bear in mind that such pressures towards conformity with the mainstream of nationalistic Judaism were experienced as much within the infant Christian communities as from without. It is not simply a matter of coincidence that in the preceding episode involving Peter prior to his arrest, Peter had been criticized by the circumcision party for eating with an uncircumcised Gentile (Acts 11:2-3). We**

need to understand that nowhere in the Torah is the Jew commanded not to eat with the Gentile; however, several Commandments from the Laws of Moses and the Laws of Noah deal with the "requirements" for food and table fellowship. This is the issue here and not just simply eating with non-Jews. **The subsequent controversy over the necessity of circumcision clearly indicates that many Jewish believers took it as axiomatic that Gentiles must be circumcised if they were to have a share in the Jewish heritage, and were prepared to exercise considerable advocacy and missionary endeavor to ensure that that heritage was neither diluted nor endangered.**

# EXAMPLES

**In Acts 15:1 we have the statement that "certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved".**

**In Acts 15: 5 we have the statement that "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying 'That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses'".**

**These are just two examples of the Jews trying to preserve and protect their faith from dilution which they expected would happen once the flood gates were open to the acceptance of the non-Jews on such a wide basis. This was an effort to keep their faith sanctified, although wrong in some ways. The Jews, the Messianic Jewish Community within Judaism, could not continue to require and put circumcision upon the non-Jew because God never commanded it in the Laws of Noah. But again we must be smart enough to understand that certain Laws in the Covenant of Noah are not negotiable and are required of all non-Jews who come to saving faith in God. It was some of these Laws which Paul has relaxed in his efforts to win the non-Jews to "his" gospel. So when the men from James came and rebuked the condition of table fellowship as they saw it Paul defends his indefensible position by stating:**

**Gal 2:4-5**

**4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:**

**5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.**

**Let us not forget that these "false brethren" were the authorities from the Jerusalem Church and they were not there to remove any liberty that the non-Jews had in God through the ministry of Yeshua, but only to make sure that obedience to the Commandments of God was being enforced within that relationship which came to them through the instruction of ministers of the Jesus' movement. Paul is sure right in one thing; he would give then no submission for his stance was etched in stone. You must understand that Paul's "truth" which he wanted to continue with his followers is not the "truth" the Jerusalem Church of Yeshua wanted to continue at all!**

**Paul would even stoop so low as to call these "pillars" in the Jerusalem "dogs" in Phil. 3:2 where he warns his readers that these ambassadors for Christ were in reality "evil workers" and "dogs". Remember with me that it is these Apostles and disciples of Yeshua in Jerusalem who not only opposed Paul and "his" gospel which in many ways opposed the true gospel of Yeshua and his church, but "dogged" him during his travels to "undue" the errors that he was teaching. It is these same "Jews" that followed Paul and were responsible at time for his "stripes", beatings, and persecutions which Paul mentions in his epistles. Think on that for a minute! These were those who knew Yeshua personally who were diligent to make sure that they could "undo" the problems created by Paul.**

**Let me say again that imposing such circumcision upon the non-Jew is totally out of step with the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah. Racial hatred of the non-Jew was the reason why such stringent requirements were put upon the non-Jews by the Jews in hopes of keeping them at arm's length.**

**Here too, we may note the evidence of the Gospel of Matthew, which indicates the conservative direction the law and Israel took in preserving the nation and its faith:**

**Matt 5:17**

**17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.**

**Matt 23:3**

**3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**

**Matt 10:5-6**

**5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

**6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**Matt 15:24**

**24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**Wholly consistent with all this, and not at all surprising in view of it, is Luke's account of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem (probably in AD 57), where James describes the church in Jerusalem (and Palestine) as consisting of 'many thousands . . . who are all zealous for the law' and who know of Paul only that he is a renegade and menace to their Jewish faith and inheritance (Acts 21:20-1).**

**The threat to Jewish prerogatives was, of course, not confined to Palestine, nor were Jewish exertions to defend them. Philo gives a clear account of the riots in Alexandria in AD 38, provoked by deliberate attacks on the religious and civic rights of the considerable Jewish population resident there (Flaccus particularly 41-54; also Embassy to Gaius 132-7). Delegations to the Emperor, the first led by Philo himself, resulted in a reassertion of these rights by Claudius in AD 41. In the same year, according to Dio Cassius, Claudius deprived the Jews resident in Rome of their right of assembly (Dio 60.6.6), and eight years later, according to Suetonius, he expelled the Jews altogether because they were 'constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus' (Suetonius, Claudius, 25.4; cf. Acts 18.2). Since all the other Jewish unrest of this period largely centered on Jewish response to what they perceived as threats to their unique racial and religious status, it may well be that the trouble in Rome was caused by similar Jewish reaction to the success of evangelism in the name of Yeshua, like that against Stephen and that against Paul (Acts 6:9-14; 21:27-36; cf. 13:50; 14:2-5, 19; 17:5-7, 13; 18:12-15).**

**Whatever the precise details of these various incidents the overall picture is clear enough. During the period in which the Antioch incident took place Jews had to be on their guard against what were seen to be repeated threats to their national and religious rights. Whenever such a threat was perceived their reaction was immediate and vigorous. In Palestine itself more and more were resorting to open violence and guerrilla warfare. The infant Christian sect was not exempt from this unrest. Indeed we may generalize a fairly firm conclusion from the above review of evidence: wherever this new Jewish sects belief or practice was perceived to be a threat to Jewish institutions and traditions its members would almost certainly come under pressure from their fellow Jews to remain loyal to their unique Jewish heritage.**

**The question which such a conclusion leaves us is obvious:**

**Answer for yourself: To what extent was the Antioch incident the result of such pressures operating upon the infant communities in Palestine and Syria, pressures from Jews loyal to their heritage both without and within the sect itself?**

**Against this background the hypothesis becomes rather compelling that the open table-fellowship practiced at Antioch was perceived by the Jerusalem church (and perhaps by other Jews) as such a threat. The mission of the men from James would then have been their reaction to that threat. And the danger of diluting or abandoning Israel's heritage with its converse and powerful appeal to national and religious loyalty would have weighed heavily with Peter, Barnabas and the rest.**

**One thing must not be overlooked here. Just before the Antioch incident Paul had returned from Jerusalem after 14 years having "won" the round concerning "circumcision" and the Messianic Community no longer would make it required for Gentile followers of HaShem. Yet Acts 15:1 links "circumcision" to the salvation of the non-Jew. This must be understood as the zealous reaction of fellow Jews from Jerusalem who were keenly aware of the threat the non-Jew presented to Judaism at present and there was a fraction within even the Messianic Movement which did not agree with James. But this issue between James and Paul had previously been worked out before Paul's return to Antioch. In fact in Acts 15:24 we have James' own admission that neither he nor his men gave any such commandment to fact that the non-Jew had to "be circumcised or keep the Law [understood as the Law of Moses as in full conversion] to be saved". Yet however dear one James never absolved the non-Jews from the Laws pertaining to them within the Covenant and Laws of Noah! It would be Paul who would do that!**

# IN CONCLUSION

**Thus already a fair amount of light has been shed on the Antioch incident from the broader background. We may summarize these preliminary observations thus.**

- **At this stage of its growth, the new movement of Yeshua's followers would almost certainly still think of themselves as a development of and within the religion of the Jews (a form of eschatological, messianic Judaism) - not yet a distinct faith or separate religion.**
- **Within this Messianic Movement within Judaism, the primacy and authority of the Jerusalem apostles in matters of dispute, specifically over what requirements should be laid on Gentiles who wished to associate with the new movement, would be generally acknowledged, and in fact had already been acknowledged by the church at Antioch and by Paul, the delegate/apostle of the Antioch church.**
- **The increasing threat to Judaism, especially from the deteriorating political situation in Palestine, and the increasingly polemical response of the Jews themselves, would increase the pressures on those involved in the new movement to show themselves as faithful and loyal Jews. In short, the probability is strong that all the main participants in the Antioch incident would naturally think of themselves as first and foremost Jews (a probability confirmed by Gal. 2.15); as such they would naturally look to Jerusalem for direction when in doubt and not Paul; and as such they would inevitably feel themselves moved by the mounting groundswell of Jewish nationalistic and religious sentiment.**

**With the broader background thus clarified we can now dig more deeply into that which most concerns us - the table fellowship at Antioch.**

**Answer for yourself: What was at stake in the Antioch church's practice of table-fellowship?**

**Answer for yourself: Within the context of Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism in the middle of the first century AD, how would the table-fellowship at Antioch have appeared? - as something unexceptional, as something very unusual, as a breach of Jewish practice and covenantal loyalty which posed a threat, or what?**

**Answer for yourself: We are accustomed to seeing the issue through the eyes of Paul (Gal. 2.11-18). But how was it seen through the eyes of “the men from James”?**

**This brings us to the next stage of our analysis.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #8

## WHAT WERE THE LIMITS OF TABLE-FELLOWSHIP IN THE JUDAISM OF THE LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD?

**The significance of table-fellowship in the east is well known. In Judaism particularly the religious significance of a shared meal was central. 'In Judaism', as Jeremias notes, "table-fellowship means fellowship before God, for the eating of a piece of broken bread by everyone who shares in the meal brings out the fact that they all have a share in the blessing which the master of the house has spoken over the unbroken bread" (J.Jeremias, New Testament Theology. Vol. I. "The Proclamation Of Jesus" (1971; ET London: SCM, 1971) 115. The added significance for the rabbis and their pupils is well characterized in a saying of R. Simeon (c. 100-160 or 170):**

**If three have eaten at one table and have not spoken over it words of the Law, it is as though they had eaten of the sacrifices of the dead (Ps. 106:28), for it is written, 'For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness without God' (Isa. 28:8 -'place' taken as a designation for God). But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken over it words of the Law, it is as if they had eaten from the table of God, for it is written, 'And he said unto me, This is the table that is before the Lord' (Ezek. 41:22). (m. Abot 3.3)**

**No devout Jew could engage in an act of such religious significance casually, and the question of who was and who was not an acceptable table companion must have greatly exercised the minds of such Jews during the period which concerns us, as the Antioch incident itself demonstrates (cf. Acts 11:2-3; 1 Cor: 8-10).**

**Acts 11:2-3**

**2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,**

**3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.**

**To put it another way, part of the pressure on a devout Jew in the 40s and 50s of the first century AD would have been the compulsion to observe the limits of acceptable table-fellowship. These limits would be determined partly by two things:**

- **The explicit laws in the Torah, particularly concerning unclean foods (Lev. 11:1-23; Deut. 14:321), and**
- **The multiplying halakoth of the oral tradition concerning tithes and ritual purity.**

## THE ANTIOCH CHURCH AND THEIR OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS OF NOAH AND THE LAWS OF MOSES

**Basically the issue we are facing is if under the teachings of Paul was the Antioch Church, containing both Jewish and non-Jewish believers, observing and keeping the respective Laws of their respective Covenants. You will come to see that both the Jew and the non-Jew were in violation of their respective Covenants and one must look to the teacher who failed to instruct properly; in this case we must confront Paul for what he was actually doing and teaching which was contrary to both the Jew's and non-Jew's respective Covenant stipulations. The New Testament, and especially epistles from Paul's perspective, give a certain "spin" to the story, but research in both Covenants and their respective requirements are very telling in the gathering of truth and exposing Paul's apostasy!**

# BACKGROUND....THE COVENANT AND LAWS OF NOAH FOR THE NON-JEW

**Some basic background information into the Laws of Noah concerning abstaining from eating the limb of a living animal will be very helpful at this point in our study. There is some discussion as to whether or not the prohibition of eating the limb of a living animal was originally given to Adam, the first man. One opinion states that it was included in the original commandment forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 56 b). According to this opinion, Adam, who was clearly given vegetation for food, as it is written, "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the whole earth, and every tree upon which there is fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you these shall be for food" (Gen. 1:29), was not forbidden to eat meat, but was merely forbidden to kill animals for food. If the animal had died of itself, it was permissible as food (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 56 b). What Noah was given, therefore, was permission to kill animals for food, but he was forbidden by God to eat the flesh of any animal while the animal was still alive (Gen. 9:4, Commentary on Rashi). According to the other opinion, Adam had received six of the Seven Universal Laws and had been forbidden to eat the flesh of an animal in any manner. Only after the Flood was the leniency of permitting animal flesh instituted (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings, chapter 9, law 1).**

**This commandment is explicit, as it is written, "Every moving thing that lives shall be for you for food; just as the green herbs, I have given you everything. But flesh with its living soul, its blood, you shall not eat" (Gen. 9:3-4). This means that an animal's soul is contained in its blood and it is this soul/blood that God was forbidding man to drink animal blood. The life is in the blood and it is this life that God has given as an atonement. One should realize that when "blood" is mentioned it is truly meaning something deeper; it means the soul atones. One's life, his soul, atones in his actions and repentance following his sin. There are studies on this on the net explaining how Christianity has misunderstood this concept and how the Jews have got it right all along! The vitalizing animal soul is contained within the blood, and this is what the commandment refers to, for when an animal dies, this vitalizing soul departs. So long as this vitalizing soul remains within the animal, its flesh is forbidden to man as food (Lev. 17:14 , commentary of Rashi; Gen. 9:4, commentary of S. R. Hirsh).**

**At first glance, this commandment seems peculiarly out of place as one of the Seven Universal Laws. How can eating the limb of an animal take its place side by side with such monumental principles of human morality as those prohibiting idolatry or murder? Besides a few scattered sociological perversions in Africa and China, one is hard put to imagine who would even consider eating an animal's meat while the animal lives.**

**And yet this is precisely why this commandment may well epitomize the spirit of the Seven Universal Laws. Although mankind is enjoined to obey the Seven Laws of Noah along with their specific commandments as they appear, nevertheless the letter of the law serves only as a minimum, a starting point, which guarantees God's favor and ensures human morality. But, if man wishes to realize his spiritual greatness, he must tap into the infinite potential of the Seven Laws, using them to refine and elevate himself. We see here that eating the limb of a living animal serves as a hint to the potential refinement that man can attain through his eating habits and by practicing kindness to God's creatures. For what man ingests as food is absorbed in his bloodstream and in every cell of his body and thereby becomes part of his essential being. The person who eats snakes and monkeys will surely be different from the one who eats nuts and berries.**

**The Noahide may eat the flesh of an animal that dies by itself (Encyclopedia Talmudica, vol 3, chp. 21), but there is an opinion stating that only the flesh of an animal killed through slaughtering is permissible" (Asarah Ma'amarot, Chekur Din, sec. 3, chp. 21).**

**For the Noahide animals, birds, and fish may be killed for food in any way that man deems to be efficient and it should be done as humanely as possible. For the Noahide, the non-Jewish believer, slaughtering of animals or birds does not have to be in a ritual manner as with Jews. But this was a Commandment which had to be enforced and taken up by the non-Jews voluntarily if the Jew was to partake of the food at any table fellowship with non-Jews. Again this was voluntary and is a perfect example of "choosing those things that please God" as instructed of non-Jews in Isaiah 56. The non-Jews might not have been given such a commandment but if they were to share table fellowship with Jews then it was up to them to voluntarily take upon themselves those commandments requiring ritual slaughter if fellowship with their Jewish brethren was to ensure. Let us again be reminded that such table fellowship is the example and rehearsal of the Marriage Supper where both peoples of God; both Jew and non-Jew share in the "supper" of God!**

**Notice again that the issue of "circumcision" had been dealt with for the most part after Paul's 14 year absence and subsequent trip to Jerusalem, but not all Jews had yet "agreed" to this mandate by James. Yet circumcision remained a problem for many Jews, especially the non-Messianics. In Antioch "tensions" surfaced where the non-Jews were expected to respond in obedience to other commands if they were to maintain fellowship with their Jewish brethren. Notice these "other commands" were not required of these non-Jewish believers, but they "had to" keep them if they were intent on solidifying their fellowship with their Jewish brethren.**

**This is where we begin to encounter problems in the Antioch incident and why the men from James began to rebuke Paul for the manner of table fellowship which was being practiced in his congregation. The Jews had no options: either be excluded or compromise their Covenant and Commandments and sin! The men from James discerned that the table fare, which had come from the Gentile market-place had not been prepared, ritually slaughtered, drained of all blood, and most likely not tithed of, which was required by the Covenant and Laws of Moses. Even Peter and Barnabas and other Jews in the congregation had been misled by such practices as condoned under the auspices of being "in Christ" and "becoming all things to all men that they might win some". There were certain procedures involved in the killing of the animal which was commanded to be done in as merciful a manner as possible before the animal was considered "kosher" for consumption by the Jew. The practice of such relaxation of such commandments was not acceptable to the men from Jerusalem and nor it should be.**

**The men from James had not forgotten that one guilty of transgressing this commandment in the Laws of Noah or Laws of Moses, in any of its manifestations, is subject to punishment by the courts whether he eats the limb of a living animal or merely the flesh of a living animal or any internal organ, even the smallest amount, or even eating the smallest amount of an animal that has not been killed by Biblically sanctioned ritual slaughter. A Jew was subject to punishment by the courts for eating the limb or the flesh of either a living domestic or wild animal which had not been ritually slaughtered according to the Torah.**

**The Antioch congregation under the authority of Paul had somehow not bothered themselves with this commandment since "being in Christ" for them meant they were no longer under the Law according to Paul. But the men from James and the Jerusalem Church had something to say about that. The uproar would be heard all the way back in Jerusalem and the Acts 15 Council would be called and these principals reiterated to Paul and included in letters to all the churches of Asia Minor.**

**Answer for yourself: What does this have to say about such practices in Gentile Churches today?**

**Animals, together with their lives, were given into the hands of mankind. The higher spiritual rank of man dictates that he not eat the limb of a living animal. Even though human flesh and animal flesh are related, the one may be incorporated within the other through eating. But the soul of an animal may never be incorporated**

**within the soul of man. The soul (in the blood) of an animal must first be separated from its physical being before the animal body may be absorbed within and become part of the human body (Gen. 9:4, commentary of S. R. Hirsch). This means that certain procedures are necessary to drain the blood, which contains the life and soul of the animal, from the animal before the flesh is fit for consumption. This is applicable to both Jew and non-Jew. Such procedures as commanded in the Laws of Noah and the Jewish Laws were not practiced in pagan markets of that day and time and such meat at table fellowship had no guarantee that such safeguards had been taken to ensure the blood was completely drained from the animal. Besides methods of slaughter as addressed above, now we have the problem of draining the blood completely before consumption. These violations would be grouped under the admonition of James in Acts 15 as "refraining from pollution of idols and blood"! Remember this "seemed good to the Holy Spirit":**

**Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)**

**Obedience to the law on unclean foods had been one of the make or break issues in the Maccabean rebellion. "Many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die" (1 Macc. 1.62-3). No one who cherished the memory of the Maccabees would even dream of eating unclean food. The typical Jewish attitude at the time with which we are concerned is probably well caught by Luke's account of Peter's reaction to the vision given him in Joppa: "I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean" (Acts 10.14). This belief was later compromised in Peter and other Jew's lives because of Paul's teaching in Rom 10:4 that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" we may not possibly ever know. What we can be sure of is that we have a rather perplexing problem in the testimony of the New Testament concerning the "attitudes of Yeshua and of Paul as to the law.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua the Yeshua of Mark 7, who denies that anything outside a man is able to defile him and who thus defines all foods as clean (Mark 7:15, 18-19) or is Yeshua the Yeshua of Matt. 5, who declares the inviolability of jots and titles and the importance of even the least commandments (Matt. 5:18-19; 23:23)? All we can say is that the Pauline corpus of writings existed prior to the writing of the Gospels and to think that the Gospels and their writers were not influenced by Pauline theology would be rather naive.**

**Jewish devotion on this point was particularly expressed in their abhorrence of pigs and of pork. The height of Antiochus Epiphanes' abomination had been his sacrifice of swine on the altar(s) of the temple (Josephus, Antiquities 13.8.2 §§ 243). Continuing Jewish antipathy to the pig is illustrated by the Mishna's refusal to allow Jews to rear swine anywhere (in Israel) (m. Baba Qamma 7.7). And Jewish rejection of pork was well known and often commented on in Greek and Roman society. For example, Philo reports Caligula as interrupting his hearing of the Alexandrian delegations with the abrupt question, "Why do you refuse to eat pork?" (Embassy to Gaius 361), and Plutarch devotes one of his Quaestiones Convivales to discussion of why Jews abstain from pork (4.5). Clearly abstention from pork was thoroughly characteristic, we may even say universally characteristic, of Jewish conduct both in Palestine and in the Diaspora.**

**But notice if you will Paul's comment in Gal 2:4:**

**4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:**

**The Greek word for "spy" is Strong's Number #2684 (kataskopeo) which means to inspect, to view closely, in order to spy out and plot against. Understand that when they observed table fellowship something was "visible" that first grabbed their attention as to irregularities. The only thing "visible" was the type of food on the table to begin with and most likely this points to the fact that the diet of that day contained "unclean" and unkosher food". This only led to other deeper problems such as the lack of tithing, the lack of ritual slaughter, etc.**

**Equally abhorrent to the devout Jew was food tainted by the abomination of idolatry, although the**

**extra-biblical documentation is thinner in this case. In addition to 1 Corinthians 8-10 and Acts 15.20, 29, we may mention Josephus' report of how in 64 C.E. he sought to aid certain priests of his acquaintance who had been taken prisoner in Rome and who "even in affliction had not forgotten the pious practices of religion, and supported themselves on figs and nuts" (Life 3 §§13-14), presumably in part at least to avoid meat left over from pagan sacrifices (4 Macc. 5.2). This will be dealt with in more detail in other articles.**

**Likewise with meat (of clean animals) from which the blood had not been drained, in accordance with the clear and repeated commandments of Moses (Lev: 3.17; 7:26-7; 17:10-14; Deut: 12.16, 23-4; 15.23; Acts 15:20, 29). What constituted a proper slaughtering of a clean animal for food is well defined in rabbinic Judaism by the time of the Mishna (tractate Hullin; also Keritot 5.1), but we can gain some idea of how far the halakoth had developed by the middle of the first century from Hullin 1.2, which reports the debate between the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel on what precisely was allowed by the (presumably) earlier ruling that slaughter with a handsickle was valid. If you recall the Noahide, let alone the Jew, was commanded not to eat any animal in which the "life/soul" remained in the animal. The higher spiritual rank of man dictates that he not eat the limb of a living animal. Even though human flesh and animal flesh are related, the one may be incorporated within the other through eating. But the soul of an animal may never be incorporated within the soul of man. The soul (in the blood) of an animal must first be separated from its physical being before the animal body may be absorbed within and become part of the human body (v. 27:30-32).**

**Equally abhorrent to the devout Jew was food that was consumed from which a "tithe" had not been given. To consume food without first tithing from it was considered robbery from God. A tenth part of agricultural produce or livestock which was "holy to the Lord". Animals, together with their lives, were given into the hands of mankind. The Bible specifies various percentages of the crop that the farmer must allocate in accordance with given criteria as a religious offering to particular individuals. The custom of tithing is of ancient origin, as Abraham gave a voluntary tithe to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20; cf.28:22). As part of the commandments "dependent on the Land [of Israel]," these tithing regulations are only applicable to produce grown there (Kid. 1.9). Such laws applied to the first six years of the seven-year cycle during which crops were grown; no tithes were given in the seventh Sabbatical year (shemittah) during which the fields had to remain fallow.**

**God shares with us in the Commandments of the Tithe that if we fail to set apart a "tithe" for the "poor", the remainder we keep for ourselves is considered by God as if it is "stolen". If we fail to remember the poor then God considers that all we have which we consider as "ours" since we worked for it as if it were"stolen" and it is not released for our use. Thus, we rob God in a big way. The real problem is if the church where we attend is teaching the tithe correctly; don't bet on it until you have studied it out! You will be shocked if you do!**

**During two years of every seven year cycle (the third and the sixth years), a person was obligated to "set apart" from the fruit of his soil a tithe for the poor, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; in addition to the Terumah (the heave offering) and Masser (first fruit offering) which he "set apart" for the Kohen (priest) and the Levite respectively. If one failed to formally "set apart" the tithe for the poor the entire basket was prohibited for use by the giver even if the Terumah and the Maaser Rishon (the first tithe which went to the Levite) had already been "set apart". The men from James ascertained that since the table fare had come from the market place in Antioch that the "dinner" had not been tithed of according to Scripture and that in reality those at table were robbing God. Thus again the rebuke of Paul, Peter, Barnabas, and the whole church.**

**Answer for yourself: Does you church give, as commanded in the Jewish Scriptures of Moses, to give all of the tithe every 3 years to the poor (equivalent to 1/3 of the church's budget every year)? Hardly! Hast God said?**

**"For the poor will never cease from the midst of the land." "Take care" the Torah (the first 5 books of the Old Testament) therefore said to the Jew, "lest you forget the stranger, the orphan, the widow or the poor. When one eats of the bread of the land, he is to know that the land and its fullness belongs to the Lord alone. The food which He prepared for His creatures, He prepared for them all". If food for a poor person was not available in his home, it was considered to be available through "your" home. The food he needs, is his, not yours! And**

**when you give the poor his Masser (heave offering), it is not charity which you give him. Rather are you returning what belongs to him. When you made the return, you did so graciously, as one does who returned an object temporarily entrusted to him for safekeeping.**

**The Kohen (priest) acquired his portion first. After him came the Levite. The poor, the stranger, the orphan and the widow came next. And you guessed it-the people of the land came last! What those at Antioch were not observing is this practice of tithing first before they consumed their food. If you have already "set apart" the required Terumah and Maaser offerings, you too may eat your "bread" in joy, for God has graciously acknowledged your deeds. Even if you have not yet actually given the offerings already "set apart," to their respective recipients, the remainder of your produce is already permitted to you by God. When you "set apart" your Terumah and Maaser offerings you thereby receive the right to enjoy the remnant of your product. In the act of "setting apart" you acknowledge God's ownership of the land, His being the source of your bounty, and the consequent claim of others to their rightful portion of your bounty. God then grants to you your portion and he says; "What remains...is for you. Let it be yours!" Whoever keep the portion of the poor in his possession, and fails to give it to them, is not withholding charity, but is rather in possession of stolen property (Mal. 3:8). And the people of God are not given to such malicious wrongdoing.**

***These matters are of paramount importance to our discussion of the incident at Antioch and Paul's breach of the Law for both Jews and non-Jews.***

# LOOKING FROM THE JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

**Obedience to these commands so clearly set out in the Torah was obviously fundamental to devout Jews in our period; it belonged to the distinctiveness of their race and religion and marked them out as Yahweh's chosen people. Such fundamental laws were a limiting factor of considerable consequence for the devout Jew's practice of table-fellowship. These Laws and Commandments are not negotiable for the Jew. They did not, we should note, inhibit his own entertainment of others, where he was responsible for what was served up and for the manner of its preparation. But these Laws and Commandments would largely prevent him from accepting with an easy conscience invitations from others (Gentiles) who might ignore them in whole or in part, hence it is the case of an invitation to someone else's house which Paul discusses in 1 Corinthians 10.27-9.**

**But whereas Paul was addressing non-Jews who were called to table fellowship with other non-Jews in I Cor. 10:27-29, the Jew is held to a higher standard. The Jew were called to a higher level of holiness than non-Jews and unlike the non-Jews who need not ask about where the "dinner" came from, the Jew has to know. When Paul would go on to say in I Cor. 10:38 "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" we would be wrong to conclude that "everything" was fair game and was able to be consumed in any manner whatsoever because stipulations in preexisting Covenants state otherwise!**

***It was these laws which were being overlooked at table fellowship in Antioch. The men from James when they arrived "spied" out Paul's liberty as he stated, and found several things wrong. They called for immediate repentance and Peter and Barnabas and the rest of the Jewish part of the congregation removed themselves.***

***The rest is up to you..shalom.***

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #9

## TITHING AND RITUAL PURITY

**One of the most striking features about the Pharisees in Palestine prior to the Jewish revolt was their preoccupation with defining the limits of table-fellowship more scrupulously. J. Neusner has concluded from his meticulously detailed study of rabbinical traditions about the Pharisees that of the 341 individual rulings from our period "no fewer than 229 directly or indirectly pertain to table-fellowship, approximately 67% of the whole" (Neusner, Rabbinic Traditions 3.297, pp. 291-4). Within these the major concerns were quite clearly ritual purity and tithing.**

**As to ritual purity, the Pharisees quite simply sought to apply the purity laws governing the temple ritual to their everyday lives. Others might quite properly conclude that these laws referred only to the priests when performing their temple service and to themselves only when they went to the temple; outside the temple the laws of ritual purity need not be observed.**

**But the Pharisees held that even outside the temple, in one's own home, the laws of ritual purity were to be followed in the only circumstances in which they might apply, namely, at the table. Therefore, one must eat secular food (ordinary, everyday meals) in a state of ritual purity as if one were a temple priest.**

**The detail with which the schools' debates were already concerned, as to the precise circumstances in which foods and food containers would be rendered unclean, indicates clearly the importance of such matters for the Pharisees and their conscientiousness in trying to maintain their purity (cf. Matt. 23.25-6).**

**Matt 23:25-26 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. (KJV)**

**It is important to note that Jesus was not condemning the Pharisees for their ritual purity and their efforts in such regards, he was however, rebuking their religiosity at the expense of weightier matters of their faith; namely, the issues of the heart and their neglect of loving-kindness to the poor and downtrodden. The Kingdom of Heaven, of what Jesus spoke, was not just internal and personal, it was something that needed to be manifested in positive actions to those needing help. It was love in action, not just in theory. This is where some, but not all, of the religious Pharisees failed! Notice I said "some" for history shows that many would not be included in Jesus' rebuke for they understood and lived the life which Jesus modeled. But as you know, even today we have our "hypocrites."**

**Particularly important here was the cleansing of the hands which were always liable to uncleanness through an unintentional touching. A complete tractate of the Mishnah was to be devoted to the purity of hands (Yadayim),**

**and the ramifications must already have been the subject of debate at our time, as our own Gospel traditions also testify (Mark 7.2-5; Matt. 15.2; Luke 11.38).**

**Mark 7:2-5 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? (KJV)**

# THE IMPORTANCE OF TITHING TO RITUAL PURITY

**Tithing was important according to the same logic, since only food which had been properly tithed was ritually acceptable. That is to say, tithing was as much concerned with table-fellowship as ritual washing. Tithing was considered a dietary Law (Neusner, Politics to Piety, 80, 83). Here too it is significant that a whole tractate of the Mishnah was to be devoted to rulings about produce not certainly tithed (Demai), that is to guidance for the devout Jew in his dealings with Jews whose devotion to the law could not be presumed (particularly the am ha-aretz). And again there can be little doubt that scrupulous tithing must have formed an important element in the Pharisaic halakoth of pre-AD 70 Palestine, as our own Gospel traditions again confirm (Matt. 23.23; Luke 18.12).**

**Matt 23:23 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (KJV) Again we find Jesus not rebuking them for what they were doing in this regard, but failing to continue their actions to the more important aspects of their faith; namely, positive actions toward others. True Biblical faith does not just "believe," it "responds in concrete actions based on that faith."**

**Jesus' brother even said: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead [James 2:20 20] (KJV)**

**We should not confine the influence of such Pharisaic rulings and practice to their own ranks (the haberim). For the well-attested Pharisaic criticisms of Yeshua's table-fellowship as an eating with 'tax collectors and sinners' (Mark 2.16; Matt. 11.l9; Luke 7.34; Luke 15.2) and of his eating with unwashed hands (Mark 7.2-5; Matt. 15.2; Luke 11.38) were precisely criticisms of a devout Jew outside the Pharisaic circle for not observing the Pharisaic halakoth -"Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders . . .?" (Mark 7.5; Matt. 15.2). What is important for our understanding here is if this issue, as detailed in the New Testament, was in reality in effect and imposed upon non-Pharisees and non-Priests in the days of Jesus. There is evidence that such regulations, as imposed upon the general populace, was only later applied to the common people in the time of Rabbi Akiba. That means when reading the New Testament that such events most likely never happened as recorded, and was later inserted into the text to further separate Jesus and his faith in order to give authority for the new religion which would later be created by Rome.**

# TITHING…OUTSIDE THE LAND OF ISRAEL

**Now let us look closer to how this applied to Paul and his Gentile followers. Nor can we assume that such influence was limited to Palestine. It is true that some halakic sources ruled that the law of tithes did not apply "outside the Land" (e.g. m. Halla 2.2; m. Qiddusin 1.9):**

- **But already in Tobit we read of tithes being scrupulously observed from a home in Nineveh (Tob. 1.6-8).**
- **Josephus mentions an edict issued by the pro-consul of Asia Minor to the people of Miletus in the days of Caesar permitting the Jews to "perform their native rites and manage their produce in accordance with their customs" (Antiquities, 14.10.21 §245), which presumably indicates that the practice of tithing was**

**well established among the Jews of Asia Minor in the first century BC.**

- **And Philo tells us that tithing was observed by the Jewish community in Rome (Embassy to Gaius 156) and implies that the Alexandrian Jews did the same (Special Laws 1.153).**

**Answer for yourself: So what do we learn from the above statement? Namely, that the Laws of the Tithes, although officially not required outside the Land of Israel, was seen to be practiced as the usual "custom".**

# RITUAL PURITY

**As to the purity ritual we may simply note that the practice of Jewish ritual cleansing outside Palestine is presumed by the Epistle of Aristeas 305-6, and that such purifications are described as characteristic of Jews as a people by the Sibylline Oracles 3.592-3 and Josephus, Against Apion, 2.23, 24 §§198, 203. Philo also testifies to a more general concern in Diaspora Judaism for a punctilious observance of the law (Migration of Abraham, 89-93). Here too we should note Paul's own testimony, that though he came from the Diaspora, nevertheless he "advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1.14; cf. Phil. 3.6). It is this Pharisaic striving for a rectitude beyond what was written which is probably in view in the fierce condemnation of Matthew 23.15 - a proselytizing zeal on the part of the Pharisees is elsewhere unattested, but the Pharisees may indeed have been more than willing to "traverse sea and land" to ensure that those who became proselytes properly understood the full extent of their obligations under the law ("when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves").**

**We may justifiably infer, then, that wherever Pharisaic influence was strong during the middle decades of the first century of our era, both within Palestine and among strong concentrations of Jews in the Diaspora, there would be pressure on those who thought of themselves as good Jews to observe the halakic clarifications of the laws on tithes and purity - that is to say, pressure on devout Jews *(including proselytes)* to observe strict limits in their practice of table fellowship.**

# BUT THERE WERE OTHER OPINIONS..THERE WAS NO UNIFORMITY

**On the other hand we should not assume that this pressure would be constant and consistent. The Pharisees were not the only ones with views on these matters. For a start, the Sadducees denied that the laws of purity were applicable outside the temple. At the other end of the spectrum, the Essenes observed rules of ritual purity even stricter than those of the Pharisees (lQS 3.4-5, 8-9; 5.13; 6.16-17, 25; 7.3, 16; lQSa 2.3-9; CD 10.10-13; Josephus, Jewish War 2.8.5, 9-10 §§129, 149-50). And we know that within the ranks of the Pharisees there were many debates between the schools of Shammai and Hillel about particular details, where the concern in effect was to define the precise limits of table-fellowship. We also know that the Pharisees of our period already distinguished several degrees of purity.**

**Similarly with the Essenes: according to Josephus the novice had to pass through several stages of purification before participating in the common food (Jewish War, 2.8.7 §§137-9), and a senior member could be rendered impure by the touch of a junior member of the community (Jewish War, 2.8.10 §150). Once the concept of differing degrees of purity within the temple ritual was translated into rules governing everyday table-fellowship it inevitably meant that different degrees of association were possible - he who lived at a stricter level of purity could not eat with one who observed a less strict discipline. And I stress that Jewish records date this event in the time of Rabbi Akiba around 100 A.D.; long after the life-time of Jesus!**

**We may conclude that in the Palestine of our period there was a wide spectrum of teaching and practice on this precise issue - from the am-ha-aretz who knew not the law (cf. John 7.49) to the stricter Pharisees and 'the many' of the Essenes at the other, with varying degrees of scrupulousness and disagreement about particular**

**details in between. Insofar as the new sect of followers of Yeshua was to any extent influenced by Pharisaic views, its members were bound to be caught up in these debates and cross-currents about the acceptable limits of table-fellowship. We need simply note here that it is precisely an issue of this sort, and the disagreements between Christians concerning it, which is reflected in the different emphases drawn by Mark and Matthew from Yeshua's words about true cleanliness (Mark 7.19; Matt. 15. 17, 20).**

**Mark 7:19 19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? (KJV)**

**Of particular interest for us is what all this would have meant for the devout Jew (including the devout Nazarene) in his social intercourse with Gentiles. It is to this subject we continue to investigate as this get us to the core of the problem at Antioch. Having surveyed the various beliefs about Table-fellowship with non-Jews let us now turn our attention to the Paul-Peter problem at Antioch.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #10

**We have spent considerable time researching into the background of "table-fellowship" in Judaism in relationship to what is "accepted" and what is "not accepted" in the religion of Israel and the Jews. We must never forget that Yeshua is a Jew and that he had certain views in these areas as well, and such views, when ascertained, should be used to help us "non-Jewish believers" chart our way in such areas as well. Besides the Gospels we can look at normative Biblical Judaism to see what were the current views held by conservative Jews in these areas as well as they would apply to Yeshua in this time period. We must remember that the issue is more than just "table-fellowship" and goes to the very core of how we, non-Jewish believers in the God of Israel, through the ministry of Yeshua, are to be accepted and included in the Israel of God. This is the crux of the matter as these dogmas express the will of God for the non-Jew in these areas. These teachings by the followers of Yeshua, we must remember, are expressed "after the cross" of Yeshua and were intended to be enforced on all non-Jews who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua and his disciples. That means you and me! Just because our denominations teach something different today does not mean they are right and your relationship with God, as He intended, is being upheld in good standing by you. This issue cuts to the very core of the Torah and the Law and how much of it applies to the non-Jewish believer. You must understand if I can prove, as I will, that we are truly grafted into Israel and not the Baptist, Catholic, or the Methodist Church, then the covenant by which we are related to God and its covenant stipulations and commandments, as upheld by us, is the means by which we keep ourselves in good standing in the covenant and maintain a positive relationship with God. Let us never confuse our emotions and our love for God for how God looks at us and how He feels about us. We can only be certain of such areas by adherence to what God said and His representative which gave His will in the matter. It is to these men moved by the Holy Spirit as found in the early Jerusalem Church can be certain that our actions and conduct is pleasing and acceptable to God. This is why I provoke you to think about the historical accuracy of the accounts in the New Testament in order for your to see "if you really are in the faith or not". You must realize if you are "outside" of the Covenant God gave you, or believe you are under another one created by Gentile Christianity which God never gave, then in reality you are without a Covenant before God!Making one up, as Gentile Christianity has done concerning the supposed "New" Covenant is not valid and God knows it. It is those who have failed to study these issues in detail who will lose in the end. Now on with the study.**

## WE EITHER FOLLOW PAUL OR YESHUA…BUT WE CANNOT FOLLOW BOTH

**In our previous studies we have found that there was no unanimous opinion regarding how to relate to the non-Jew in Judaism. We have found in the previous article that no one opinion on ritual purity held sway but that many different ideas were promoted. For our discussion purposes we are concerned as to how the Messianic Community of the First Century understood it and how they ruled accordingly. As followers of Yeshua the**

**Messianic congregation of Jerusalem should have a major influence on our beliefs and conduct today as non-Jewish followers of Yeshua. We either walk in the footsteps of the early Messianic Jewish Jerusalem Church or we do not. We either follow Paul and his ideas or Yeshua's and his followers. Dear one they are not the same! The sad fact is that the vast multitude of Christian believers today follow Paul and think they are at the same time following the wishes of Yeshua and the Jerusalem Church. Nothing could be further from the truth as we shall see as we continue our examination of the issues involved at the incident at Antioch.**

# WHAT DOES ALL WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR MEAN TO A NAZARENE BELIEVER IN HIS SOCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH GENTILE BELIEVERS IN THE FIRST CENTURY FOLLOWING YESHUA'S DEATH?

**As a Gentile Christian you need to understand that the dominant tendency within Judaism in the century or so around the time of Yeshua seems to have been to avoid such intercourse with Gentiles as much as possible. This can be attributed in a large sense to the teachings of R. Shammai and his Rabbinic School. This might be shocking to you as well but there is not one story in the New Testament where Yeshua welcomes non-Jews! In fact his response to them ranges from calling the daughter of a non-Jew a "dog" to instructing his followers to not go to the Gentiles [THINK].**

**Matt 15:26**

**26 But he answered and said (speaking to the Gentile woman), It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.**

**Matt 10:5-6**

**5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

**6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**To think that Yeshua's primary intent was to "save" the Gentile is a severe misjudgment of his time and his religion. To the lost sheep of the House of Israel he was sent and they were being assimilated and had been, in the days of Yeshua, become part of the Gentile peoples of the world for over 800 years. Yeshua knew it was these people, formerly Jews who had a Covenant with HaShem, who were now being "lost" to their heritage and their faith and their privileges as well as their responsibilities before God. But a "pure" Gentile mission was not on his mind I assure you. He knew what the Gentile Church does not today; namely that the Gentiles were unclean. Yeshua knew that only by the non-Jew's submission to the God of Israel whereby the non-Jews took up the Covenant given to them by HaShem whereby they submitted to the commandments of God would they then find acceptance within the particular Covenant given them by God. Only by this would the non-Jew maintain their acceptance in the grace of God within the Covenant God had given them. But yet it was to these "lost" brethren from the Northern scattered tribes Yeshua was sent and not the "Eskimos" (if you get what I mean). Today it is hard to look backward and realize such since the Gentile Church is such a force in the world but that was not Yeshua's purpose…..to create a Gentile Church which would almost persecute his Jewish family to death over the centuries and completely do away with the Law which was the only means of maintaining good standing in the Covenant with God. Let us return to "table-fellowship" and acceptance of the non-Jews.**

# JEWISH RELATIONSHIP WITH GENTILES

**The stories of Daniel, of Tobit and of Judith were all held forth as examples of the faithfulness and success of**

**Jews who refused to eat "the food of Gentiles" (Dan. 1.8-16; Tob. 1.10-13; Jdt. 10.5; 12.1-20; see also 3 Macc. 3 4; Joseph and Asenath 7.1). The fear of idolatry and of impurity was a considerable limiting factor, since by definition a Gentile was an idolater and certainly ritual impurity had to be assumed rather than the reverse (Alton, Jews, 170-4; Schurer, History, 2.81-4).. This played heavy in the minds of he men from James as they came upon such a compromising situation in Antioch. Thus the Mishnaic tractate on idolatry is mainly concerned with defining the permissible relationships with Gentiles (Aboda Zara). And in several rabbinic sayings the uncleanness of the Gentile is well-known: Gentiles are simply "unclean persons" (Makhot. 2.3); 'the dwelling-places of Gentiles are unclean' (Oholot 18.7); A Gentile is in every respect like to a man who suffers a flux' (Eliyahu Rabba 10). Such sayings cannot be dismissed as the later utterances of rabbinic Judaism subsequent to our period. The prohibition on Gentiles entering the temple sanctuary was already well established by our time (cf., e.g., Antiquities, 12.3.4 §§1450), and must have been based on the belief that Gentiles were unclean. Already in Jubilees the same attitude is clearly expressed and the line firmly drawn:**

**Separate yourself from the nations, And eat not with them,..... For their works are unclean, And all their ways are a pollution and an abomination and an uncleanness ... (22.16)**

**According to the Epistle of Aristeas, Moses fenced us (Jews) round with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron, that we might not mingle at all with any of the other nations, but remain pure in body and soul . . . he hedged us round on all sides by rules of purity, affecting alike what we eat, or drink, or touch, or hear, or see. (139, 142; cf. 106)**

**And Tacitus scornfully describes the Jewish hatred for the rest of the world: "they eat separately, they sleep separately .. " (Histories, 5.5).**

**Dear ones this is the same attitude held by Yeshua!**

**If such views were consistently and rigorously applied, no devout Jew could even have considered participating in table- fellowship with a Gentile. But that is by no means the whole story.**

# BUT CERTAIN GENTILES WERE ACCEPTED INTO TABLE-FELLOWSHIP DESPITE THE ABOVE SAFEGARDS AND EXCLUSIONS

**You must keep in mind the whole purpose of these articles is to again to show how certain non-Jews were "accepted" into table-fellowship with the Jews and were included in the "Israel of God". This means those "non-Jews" who were "unacceptable" somehow were "made acceptable". This is what confronts our study as Gentile believers in the God of Israel.**

**Answer for yourself: As a traditional Christian, how certain are you in light of facts presented that you have made yourself "acceptable" to Yeshua in these areas?**

**What we must look for is which of the above responsibilities mentioned by the Rabbis were also expected of the non-Jewish believers by the Messianic Church and James in order for them to be included in the Israel of God.**

**Make so mistake about it some items mentioned above were to be later rescinded by the Jerusalem Church (circumcision) and James BUT NOT ALL and many were yet required of non-Jewish believers to be incorporated into the Israel of God (the Laws of Noah). James would call many of these "necessary" and "good to the Holy Ghost" and they apply today whether you are aware of them or not! This is the deceptions which must be removed in order for the non-Jewish believer to make his calling and election certain.**

# CLASSIFICATIONS OF NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS

**For there were two types of Gentiles towards whom even the rabbis could maintain a very positive and welcoming attitude:**

- **The Proselyte or Full Convert (Gentile converts to Judaism)**
- **Gentiles who showed themselves sympathetic to the religion of the Jews broken down into two classifications: The Resident Alien & the Godfearer**

**Answer for yourself: How were these non-Jewish believers in God, through the ministry of Yeshua's apostles, affected by the limits commanded by God and observed by the devout Jew in his table-fellowship?**

**What you the Christian must understand that there are some things commanded by God of the Jew that are eternal observances and are not negotiable and some of the "obligations" were mandated and put upon the non-Jew before or "acceptance into the Israel of God". Sadly over time some "obligations" were put upon the non-Jew which came not from God but from bigoted Jews who disliked non-Jews and wanted to keep them at arms-length from any type of politico-social intercourse. This is where our study must go if we are to discern the path for unity in the Israel of God. Because God seemed to always use the non-Jewish nations to punish the Jewish people for their transgressions you can understand the Jewish dislike for the non-Jew and their attempts to lay upon the non-Jews stipulations and obligations they knew would be so distasteful to them that few if any would accept them and want to be included in the Israel of God. Besides that Gentiles were generally thought to be "unclean." Now not all Jews felt this way but the trend leaned itself to this and this is exactly what we find happening in Yeshua's day especially under the influence of R. Shammai and his schools of Pharisees. Understand again that through the Messianic ministry of the followers of Yeshua not only the "lost sheep of the House of Israel" would be reached but the "non-Jew" as well, but again make no mistake about it, these "non-Jews" reached by the Jesus movement were obligated to certain commandments and responsibilities to be "accepted" as God's children which the Christian Church today does not teach. Again understand it was not only Yeshua's belief and will that these conditions for acceptance be met but his God and Father as well. It would do the Christian Church well to begin to serious study the first century to ascertain such things as this in order to no longer deceive and mislead their people. Surely at death we will receive a rude awakening when the Christian finds he has lived his whole life in ignorance concerning "THE" Covenant God gave him let alone the Covenant stipulations it requires. One will quickly find upon one's death that he is ill prepared for the judgment!**

**We must now look at the three classifications of the non-Jew and how each relates to his acceptance into the Israel of God.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #11

## CLASSIFICATION OF THE NON-JEW AND HOW EACH RELATES TO HIS ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD

**Following the death and resurrection of Yeshua there were no Baptists, Methodists, and Catholics. No Gentile religious establishment had not yet made "dogmas" to replace the faith of the Bible. That would come later. There were not as yet any denominational ecclesiastical authorities to replace the faith of the Jerusalem Church with those of their own making. This would come later and my dear friend you are mired in it and don't know!**

**For your information discussion in this area usually works with a three-fold distinction - the proselyte, the resident alien and the God-fearer (sometimes misleadingly called the 'half-proselyte') [G.F. Moore, Judaism, 1.326-7, 339]. This Gentile scholar knows the truth and his two set of books are in invaluable resource to anyone's library and such facts as I share with you can be found in them if you will only look. Understand as we proceed that either the Apostles of Yeshua under the influence of the Holy Spirit either went out and "did it wrong" or else they "did it right" and it is we non-Jewish believers who today, in deviating from their instructions in the matter, "does it wrong" without knowing! It is our hope and prayer at Bet Emet once you see the whole of the facts in this issue will repent and "do it right".**

### THE PROSELYTE, OR FULL CONVERT

**In the beginning the Israelite religion had always inculcated a positive attitude towards the non-Jewish stranger (ger) who lived within the borders of Israel (Exod. 20.10; 22.21; 23.9, 12; Deut. 1.16; 5.14; etc.). However, that was to change as shared above and by the first century C.E. these commands concerning the ger had been referred almost completely to the proselyte: already in the LXX (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) the regular translation of "ger" in rabbinic Judaism always means a Gentile won over to Judaism. A positive approach to proselytization is likewise indicated by such stories as those of Ruth finding shelter under Yahweh's wings (Ruth 2.12) and Achior in Judith 14.10, by Isaiah 56.1-8 addressed to 'the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord' and Matthew 23.15, by the accounts in Josephus of the forcible conversion of the Idumeans by Hyrcanus and of the Itureans by Aristobulus (Antiquities, 13.9.1 §§257-8; 13.11.3 §§31819), and by various other accounts and references in both Jewish and non-Jewish sources (e.g. Josephus, Life, 23 §§112-13; Antiquities, 18.3.5 §82; Horace, Satires, 1.4.142-3 -'we, like the Jews, will compel you to make one of our throng'). If you wish to read into these subjects let me suggest K. Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I: The Acts of the Apostles (Vol. V; London: Macmillian 1933) 82-84 and B.J. Bamberger, Proselytism in the Talmudic Period (1939; New York: Ktav, 1968) 15-16, 267 ff.**

**As a "proselyte" the Gentile had undertaken to observe the law, including circumcision, and was more or less a full Israelite (see e.g. Exod. 12.49; Philo, Special Laws, 1.51-2; b. Yebamot 47b, Josephus, Antiquities,**

**20.2.4§39). Despite the stigma of being a proselyte (m. Qiddusin 4.1), and the suspicion harboured by some rabbis that he was always liable to fall back into his old ways (m. Niddah 7.3; b. Baba Mesia 59b), the proselyte (following his mikveh, circumcision, and sacrifice) once his initiation was complete came within the same limits of table-fellowship that applied to the native born Jew (G.F. Moore, Judaism ,1.341). Of particular interest to us, however, is the fact that there seems to have been some debate among the rabbis at our period over the degree of uncleanness attaching to the Gentile proselyte at his conversion and over the length of time it took before his uncleanness could be washed away by ritual purification (m. Pesahim 8.8; m. Edayyot 5.2). Most now agree that proselyte baptism (mikveh or "being born again") had already become an accepted practice by the middle of the first century C.E. Strange as it may seen to the "born again" Christian "born again" is a Jewish concept that related to the "non-Jew" at his mikveh/baptism whereby he became a convert to Judaism and not to a competing religion such as Christianity. Ironically "born-again" Christians are complete opposite to what the term meant in the first century and have no idea whatsoever what the term meant in the discussion between Yeshua and Nicodemus. The term means becoming a proselyte to Judaism and accepting the 613 Laws and the terrible irony of the whole mess is that Christians call themselves "born-again" and reject the very Laws that when obeyed provided security of acceptance into the Covenant. So sad.**

## THE RESIDENT ALIEN

**Although it understood the biblical ger to refer to the proselyte, rabbinic Judaism also recognized a different category of Gentile, the "ger tosab", the resident alien. He too lived within the borders of Israel, but unlike the "full" proselyte who accepted the "whole of the Law" he accepted only some of the commandments of the Torah.**

**Just how much he had to accept before being recognized as a ger tosab was a subject of dispute among the rabbis. According to R. Meir (c. 150) a sufficient requirement was that the Gentile in question undertook in the presence of three haberim (holy ones) to renounce idolatry (G.F. Moore, Judaism, 1.325). In the first century before theology was worked out by the Gentiles that made Yeshua God this was not a problem for the non-Jew was taught that there is only ONE God. Today this is problematic considering the vast majority of Christians today are Trinitarians and believe Yeshua is God. The belief that Yeshua is God would disqualify them from this category. Others defined a" ger tosab" as a ger who eats of animals not ritually slaughtered, that is, he took upon himself to observe all the precepts mentioned in the Torah apart from the prohibition of (eating the flesh of) animals not ritually slaughtered' (b. Aboda Zara 64b). This will be one of the problems encountered at Antioch for the "meat" came from the market place where it had been sanctified to idols and not killed in a kosher manner thus not being ritually slaughtered. But remember that the Noahide (as the Ger Tosab) did not have to observe this commandments but "needed" to if table fellowship with non-Jews was to be observed. This exemption of the "ger tosab" from the prohibition against animals not ritually slaughtered was determined by Deuteronomy 14.21 -'You shall not eat of anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien (ger) who is within your towns, that he may eat it . . .'- a law which could properly be held to exempt the ger tosab from at least some of the restrictions governing the eating of meat, and which thus provided sanction for slackening one of the limits of acceptable table-fellowship. But the halakah which gained greatest support and decided the matter was that a "ger tosab" was any Gentile who takes upon himself the seven Noachic laws -that is, he holds himself subject to the established courts of justice, and refrains from blasphemy, idolatry, adultery, bloodshed, robbery, and eating flesh cut from living animals (b. Aboda Zara 64b; cf. b. Sanhedrin 56a). I suggest reading Moore, Judaism, 1.339 to learn more about this requirement. It is this Covenant, the Covenant of Noah which was given to the non-Jew to be "acceptable with God".**

**Understand that this Noachic Covenant was NOT being promoted to the non-Jew in the first century C.E. by R. Shammai and others because it did not require circumcision of the male. It was the act of circumcision that was hoped by the bigoted rabbis to hold the Gentile at arms length and prevent his assimilation into the Israel of God. Acts 15 is pivotal here as the Messianic Jews and Apostles of Yeshua would repent and return to the Laws of Noah for the non-Jew thus increasing the changes of inclusion of non-Jews into the Israel of God. Circumcision would no longer be enforced upon the non-Jews for fellowship or inclusion into the Israel of God. Paul would win this round however other obligations within the Laws of Noah would be**

**kept and this is where Paul would depart from the Jerusalem Church in heart and spirit.**

**Clearly, then, there was some debate among the rabbis in the period before the consensus view was established regarding the definition of a "ger tosab", a debate in effect as to the terms on which social intercourse with Gentiles living locally might be acceptable. This strongly suggests that there were already during the first century period diverse views among the rabbis regarding the limits of table-fellowship as they applied to the resident alien. Here we should note also that, despite such rabbinic characterizations of Gentile uncleanness as were cited above (m. Makkot 2.3; m. Oholot 18.7), the Mishnah contains at least two rulings which presuppose situations at the meal table where a Gentile (not a ger) was present (m. Berakot 7.1; m. Aboda Zara 5.5), and the Babylonian Talmud contains discussion of the conditions on which Jews might accept invitations to and participate in Gentile banquets (b. Aboda Zara 8a-b). We can only conclude that, in all probability, in the Palestine of our period there was also a diversity among devout Jews in their practice of table-fellowship so far as Gentiles were involved - a diversity similar in extent to or indeed continuous with the spectrum of permissible table-fellowship as determined by the various grades of purity among Jews themselves.**

## THE GODFEARER

**A third group of more acceptable Gentiles were those usually called 'God-fearers' or 'pious Gentiles'- those who showed themselves sympathetic towards Judaism - though whether 'God-fearers' was a technical term for such may be doubted. However they should be designated, there were certainly many Gentiles (we are talking here particularly of the Diaspora) who were attracted to Judaism and who signified their interest by attaching themselves to Jewish practices in differing degrees. How diverse such attachments were is a question more easily posed than answered. We know from Acts that such Gentiles attended the synagogue or Jewish meetings for worship (Acts 13.16, 26, 50; 16.14; 17.4, 17). Cornelius most nearly approaches in a technical sense as described as 'a devout man who feared God, gave alms liberally to die people, and prayed constantly to God' (10.2). We should also recall that pious Gentiles were welcome to worship in the temple (John 12.20; Acts 8.27; also Josephus, Jewish War, 4.4.4 §275), within, of course, well-defined limits (namely, the court of the Gentiles). Let me say something now that few will understand, there was a "pattern" of worship in the Temple which both Jew and non-Jew participated it. It might surprise you that this "pattern of worship" survived well into the 4th century for the non-Jew until obliterated by Constantine and the Roman Church-State.**

**Answer for yourself: If God intended this pattern of worship be observed by Jew and non-Jew up to the fourth century, could it have been God intended it be followed eternally in spite of Constantine's actions? The answer is yes especially in the light of the existence today of over 2000 different Christian denominations which are filled with hundreds of conflicting doctrines, dogmas, and differing "Jesuses".**

**The central question for us, however, is the extent to which such God-fearing Gentiles were expected to keep the law (including the oral traditions) concerning tithing and ritual purity. Josephus' claims in Against Apion, confirm the attractiveness of Judaism for many Gentiles: many Greeks 'have agreed to adopt our laws' (2.10 §123); our laws 'have to an ever increasing extent excited the emulation of the world at large' (2.38 §280; cf. 2.28 §§209-10). Philo speaks in similar and similarly vague terms in Life of Moses 2.17-20. But Josephus becomes more helpfully explicit a little further on in Against Apion -"The masses have long since shown a keen desire to adopt our religious observances; and there is not one city, Greek or barbarian, not a single nation, to which our custom of abstaining from work on the sabbath day has not spread, and where the fasts and the lighting of lamps and many of our prohibitions in the matter of food are not observed"(Against Apion, 2.38 §282).**

**Equally interesting is the succession of notices which demonstrate how attractive the Jewish way of life was for many Gentiles In Rome itself and how alarmed the authorities were in consequence. Plutarch (in a passage which relates to the middle of the first century BC) speaks of a freedman named Caecilius 'who was accused of Jewish practices'(Life of Cicero, 7.6). Seneca mentions autobiographically that in his youth he began to abstain from animal food, but that he abandoned the practice because 'some foreign rites were at that time being inaugurated, and abstinence from certain kinds of animal food was set down as proof of interest in the strange cult' (Letters, 108.22).**

**He refers most probably to the persecution of Jewish and Egyptian rites under Tiberius in AD 19 (Tacitus, Annals, 2.85).77 Perhaps significant here too is the report of Dio Cassius already cited, that in 41 Claudius forbade the Jews in Rome to hold meetings because they had increased so greatly in number (60.6.6). Better known is the persecution by Domitian of 'those who followed the Jewish way of life without formally professing Judaism' (Suetonius, Domitian, 12.2); Dio Cassius, also writing of the late first century AD, speaks of 'many who were drifting into Jewish ways' being condemned for atheism (67.14.1-3). And Juvenal confirms the attractiveness which Judaism obviously exercised for many at this period when he attacks contemporaries who 'ream and practice and revere the Jewish law' and who get themselves circumcised, under the influence of a Sabbath-reverencing, pork-abstaining father (Satires, 14.96-106). As evidence of Judaism's continuing influence at the other end of the second century AD we may simply note Tertullian's report that many Gentiles in his day observed Jewish feasts and ceremonies and Jewish practice in prayers (Ad Nariones, 1.13). It would not be unjust to deduce from all this that many God-fearers attracted by the Jewish law quite naturally would have observed the law in the way native born Jews did - that is, in the way that the developed customs and developing tradition dictated.**

**Still more interesting for us, not least because the incident described took place within a few years of the Antioch incident, is the well-known story of the conversion of Izates, king of Adiabene, recounted by Josephus (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§38-48). Izates was initially told that he need not be circumcised - 'he could worship God, even without circumcision, if he had fully decided to emulate the hereditary customs of the Jews' (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §41). Since the sticking point was circumcision, we may take it that Izates was prepared to go the whole way apart from that, and 'zeal for hereditary customs' suggests that his devotion would have embraced much at least of the oral law as well as the written Torah (cf. 20.2.3,4 §§34, 38). This may well be confirmed by the fact that when Eleazar came upon the scene from Galilee, described by Josephus as a Jew 'who had a reputation for being extremely strict concerning the hereditary customs', the only further step he required of Izates was circumcision (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§43-5).**

**Most interesting of all, however, is Josephus' description of the Jewish politeuma in Antioch in the period prior to the Jewish revolt: 'they grew in numbers . . . and were constantly attracting to their religious ceremonies multitudes of the Greeks, and these they had in some measure incorporated with themselves' (Jewish War, 7.3.3 §45). Whatever degree of devotion to the Torah, written and unwritten, on the part of the God-fearing Greeks is implied by this statement, it must denote a considerable measure of acceptance by the Antiochene Jews of these Greeks, and so also a considerable measure of social intercourse between circumcised Jew and uncircumcised Gentile.**

**We may conclude from all this that there was a broad range of attachments to Judaism and Jewish ways wherever Diaspora settlements had made any impact on the surrounding community -from occasional visits to the synagogue, to total commitment apart from circumcision, with such matters as the sabbath and dietary laws being observed in varying degrees in between. There would be a broad range of social intercourse between faithful Jew and God-fearing Gentile, with strict Jews avoiding table-fellowship as far as possible, and those less scrupulous in matters of tithing and purity willingly extending and accepting invitations to meals where such Gentiles would be present.**

**We can also see that the attitude and practice of openness to the Gentile would not have been static. It would depend upon the influence of particular rabbis and of particular rulings in matters of dispute. This is where the authority of the Jerusalem Church and the followers of Yeshua comes into the mix. We may compare, for example, the famous pericope contrasting the response of Shammai and that of Hillel to the Gentile who asked both to teach him the whole Torah while he stood on one foot (b. Sabbat 31a). It would depend on the mood of the surrounding populace and local authorities at the time -particularly in Rome, Alexandria and Antioch, where the Jews were strong in numbers and undue influence on their part could be construed as a threat to the state. And at the period which concerns us it would depend not least on the Jews' sense of the mounting threat to their religion and nation which we sketched out earlier (§2.2) and which must have expressed itself in an increasingly hostile attitude to the Gentiles. This last is illustrated by the sequence of events described in Acts 21, which depicts Jerusalem Jews in the late 50s giving ready credence to the rumor that Paul had taken a**

**Gentile into the temple (Acts 21.27-36). Another instance is the report of Josephus that at the beginning of the revolt in 66 Eleazar 'persuaded those who officiated in the temple services to accept no gift or sacrifice from a foreigner' (Jewish War 2.17.2 §409). Here too we may mention again the episode of Izates' conversion, which among other things shows that the attitude of the Palestinian Jew was stricter than that of the Diaspora Jew on the question of how far a Gentile had to go to be acceptable (Josephus, Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§38-48), and which thus provides an interesting parallel to the Antioch incident.**

**Before moving on, it is worth noting once more, if it is not already clear, that the issues in all this would have been issues for the earliest Christians too, particularly as the circle of Yeshua's discipleship began to embrace more and more Gentiles. The extent to which the spectrum of attitude and practice mirrored that within the rest of Judaism is indicated by Paul's advice to the believers in Corinth (including Jews) at one end (1 Cor. 8-10), and at the other by the reaction of the Judean brothers to Peter's eating with a Gentile, even though he was a pious God-fearer and presumably already observed the dietary laws (Acts 11.2-3). At the latter end of the same spectrum we should note also the untypical saying of Yeshua preserved for us not surprisingly only by Matthew - 'if he (the brother at fault) refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector' (Matt. 18.17). The question for us, of course, is where the Antioch incident, not to mention Acts 15.20, 29, fits into this spectrum. It is to this question that we can now at last turn.**

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# PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER …HAS THE NEW TESTAMENT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #12

## THE ISSUE AT ANTIOCH...ONE FINAL LOOK

**Against the background sketched out in the preceding articles, the exegetical alternatives in Galatians 2.11-18 become clearer.**

**The leading questions can be posed thus:**

**Answer for yourself: What did the table-fellowship at Antioch involve prior to the coming of the men from James?**

**Answer for yourself: And what would have been required of Gentile believers if the table-fellowship was to be resumed after the initial disruption caused by the withdrawal of Peter and the others?**

**Answer for yourself: To put it another way, what was it that the men from James objected to or found fault with in the table-fellowship at Antioch?**

**Answer for yourself: And how could that defect be remedied, if at all?**

**Answer for yourself: What in your practice of your faith would the Ambassadors of the Jerusalem Church find objectionable or find fault with and what bearing does this hold concerning your acceptance into the Church of Yeshua?**

**By now you should be able to answer many of these questions.**

**Understand again that there is a big difference being accepted in the Church of Yeshua as it existed in Jerusalem in the First Century C.E. and a Baptist, Catholic, or Methodist Church today. Think on these things.**

## ENTER PAUL AND HIS ANTI-JERUSALEM CHURCH THEOLOGY

***The exegetical alternatives focus particularly on the key phrases of Paul's challenge, "'If you, a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to judaize?" We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners ...' (Gal. 2. 14-1 5).85***

**Answer for yourself: 'To live like a Gentile' must exclude any detailed observance of the law; but need it exclude a more limited observance, such as many Gentiles attracted by Judaism obviously maintained? In the previous article you saw for yourself the attractiveness of Judaism to the non-Jewish world and the non-Jewish**

**believers. Gentile Christianity today surely will discount this.**

**In particular, since the Noahide Laws were thought by many Jews to apply to all mankind, we cannot exclude the possibility that the antithesis here is the antithesis between what we may call a Noahide life-style and a Sinaitic life-style, the one being characteristic of God-fearing Gentiles, the other of loyal Jews. At least this is the attitude of S. Schechter in his Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (1909; New York: Schocken , 1961) 206-207 as well as men like E.P. Sanders in his Paul, 210-211. Based upon my research I believe these men have hit the nail on the head in laying before their readers the very heart of the matter at hand.**

**The one instance from our other sources which might shed some light comes from Eusebius, where he describes Symmachus as an Ebionite, that is, as one who strongly maintained 'that the law ought to be kept in a more strictly Jewish fashion' (Ecclesiastical History, 6.17). What "a more strictly Jewish fashion" means is presumably indicated by Eusebius' earlier description of the Ebionites as those who "insisted on the complete observation of the law", and who "were zealous to insist on the literal observance of the law" (Ecclesiastical History, 3.27.2, 3). This simply serves to confirm that "to live in a Jewish fashion" was a relative term and did not imply a pattern of behavior precisely defined or widely agreed among Jews.**

**Answer for yourself: What was it that Paul accused Peter of requiring from the Gentile believers?**

**In the LXX of Esther we read that 'many of the Gentiles were circumcised and judaized for fear of the Jews' (8.17 LXX). So also Theodotus: Jacob would not give Dinah to the son of Hamor "until all the inhabitants of Shechem were circumcised and judaized)" (Eusebius, Praep. Evang, 9.22.5). In Josephus we read a similar characterization of one Metilius, the commander of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, who "saved his life by entreaties and promises to judaize and even to be circumcised" (Jewish War, 2.17.10 §454). In each instance 'judaizing' is obviously not the same as being circumcised: it denotes rather the range of possible degrees of assimilation to Jewish customs (Jewish customs are only expressions of Biblical Commandments observed), with circumcision as the end-point of judaizing; but evidently one could 'judaize' without going the whole way (circumcision). It must therefore describe that range of conduct covered by the term God-fearer (or within Palestine also the term 'resident alien') and signify an embracing of much that characterized the Jewish way of life, enough at any rate for the judaizing individual to be acceptable to devout Jews.**

**Answer for yourself: You have to ask yourself if you as a Christian embrace enough of the Jewish way of life, as understood as a life-style of Biblical observed commandments, to be acceptable to devout Jews and be included in the Israel of God? If not, after all this evidence presented I would think I would seriously rethink my relationship with God and what Covenant I have along with its Covenant stipulations and requirements.**

**Still more interesting is the passage a little later in The Jewish War, not least because it describes the situation in Syria in the mid-60s - "The whole of Syria was a scene of frightful disorder; every city was divided into two camps, and the safety of one party lay in their anticipating the other ... For, though believing that they had rid themselves of the Jews, still each city had its Judaizers, who aroused suspicion; and while they shrank from killing offhand this equivocal element in their midst, they feared these neutrals much as pronounced aliens. (Jewish War, 2.18.2 §§462-3)**

**Here we have confirmation that a considerable number of Gentiles in Syrian cities (including of course Antioch) were attracted sufficiently to Judaism as to have identified or associated them-selves in some marked degree with it. Moreover, these Gentiles are further described as 'those who had become mixed up with the Jews', and which elsewhere in such a context denotes social intercourse including guest friendship, living with, and sexual intercourse. This strongly suggests a degree of affiliation to Judaism which made possible a high level of social intercourse between Jew and Gentile, including not least unrestricted table -fellowship. Moreover, when taken together with Josephus' testimony in Jewish War, 7.3.3 §45, it clearly implies that the Jewish community at Antioch in the 50s and early 60s had attracted large numbers of Gentiles and that many of these Gentiles were sufficiently ready to conform to Jewish practices as to make possible regular social intercourse including at least guest friendship and table-fellowship. But understand those which did not share such sentiments were problematic for the men from James and would literally cause the forthcoming Acts 15 Council to settle the**

**problems.**

# THE SINNER

**A sinner is determined as such precisely by his relation to the law. 'Sinner' was becoming more and more a technical term for someone who either broke the law or did not know the law - the two criticisms of course often amounting to the same thing.**

**Matt 7:21-23**

**21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

**22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?**

**23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

**If we look up the word for "iniquity" in the Greek along with its root word you will be amazed:**

**The Strong's # for iniquity is #458 anomia:**

- **1) the condition of without law**
  - **a) because ignorant of it**
  - **b) because of violating it**
- **2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness**

**I have spent considerable time trying to reach you with the truths long overlooked by Gentile Christianity. Yeshua definitely said that he will not "know" certain people (the term in Greek means sexual intercourse and applies to the Marriage Supper where Groom Messiah and Bride (believers) become one flesh). Besides this he said that the reason that these will be rejected as "foolish virgins" is that they practice "iniquity". I know you think that such a condition cannot refer to you let alone the typical Christian. But that is exactly to whom it refers; especially the Gentile Christian! Let me show you.**

**To those whom Yeshua tells to depart and to whom will not be allowed to become one flesh with Messiah are those who, by definition, are "without the law". In Antioch Paul had been leading a Church which had laid aside their personal requirements in many areas of the "Law". Many of Paul's followers were "ignorant" of such Laws in the Covenant of Noah because they had not been taught by their spiritual leaders. So what else is new today? Mainline Gentile Christianity is totally ignorant for the most part of the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah. Being ignorant of these Laws assures you that most likely you are not observing and obeying many of them; thus you are violating them and don't even know you are. I assure you that you will find out when you die. But even more so being a traditional Pauline Christian you have grown up in church with a "contempt" for the Law as Pauline theology had been taught to you more than the faith of Yeshua. I have taken great pains to show you that other like you had been deceived by Paul in Antioch and sternly rebuked by the men from James because of it. As if that was not enough such a condition of ignorance of the Laws of Noah by the Christian today is called "wickedness" and you surely understand this since these same Laws were once considered "necessary" and were said to have "seemed good to the Holy Spirit". They still do!**

**Answer for yourself: I wonder if the Holy Spirit considers Paul's contradictions to these Laws which God considers "good" and "necessary"?**

**Now the facts: The root word for "iniquity" in the Greek is Strong's # 459 anomos (an'-om-os); from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3551; lawless, i.e. (negatively) not subject to (the Jewish) law; (by implication, a Gentile), or (positively) wicked: KJV-- without law, lawless, transgressor, unlawful, wicked.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua' implication was for Gentiles especially; Gentiles who are ignorant and disobedient and violate and have contempt for Law; in this instance the Laws of Noah, which are the laws defining their Covenant (besides many of these are reiterated in the Laws of Moses)?**

**Answer for yourself: Dear one have you not seen that this was the problem with Paul at Antioch and that his theology has literally infected the hearts and minds of good non-Jews yet today who pride themselves not "being under the Law but under grace"?**

# SINNERS (GENTILES) ....ARE LAWLESS…TORAHLESS

**Thus already in the LXX of the Psalms the link between 'sinner' and 'lawlessness' is well established (Ps. 27.3; 54.3; 91.7; 100.8; 124.3; 128.3 - LXX); the sinner is defined as one who forsakes the law, who does not seek God's statutes (Ps. 118.53, 155 - LXX). And in 1 Maccabees 'sinners' and 'lawless men' are parallel terms (1 Macc. 1.34; 2.44).**

**More striking is the way in which 'sinner' becomes synonymous with 'Gentile' - already in Psalm 9.17, and again in 1 Maccabees 2.48; also Psalms of Solomon 1.1; 2.1-2 (cf. Tob. 13.8; Jub. 23.23-4; 4 Ezra 4.23). It was evidently a well -established usage by the time of the first Christians: 'sinners' and 'Gentiles' stand as variant versions of the same Q saying (Luke 6.33- 'even sinners do the same'; Matt. 5.47 - 'even Gentiles do the same'); and the same equivalence is probably implied in the saying of Yeshua, 'the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners' (Mark 14.41//Matt.26.45; Luke 24.7), as the parallel with Mark 10.33 also suggests. Gentiles are 'sinners' by reason of the fact that they do not have the law and are disqualified by the law from covenant righteousness (cf. Clementine Homilies 11.16).**

***Having taken all that went before into consideration now let us hear clearly the implications from the ministry of Yeshua and its meaning for today's Christian***

**Still more striking for us is the evidence of how the word was used in relation to Yeshua's ministry, as a description of those within Israel whose way of life should have debarred them from the table -fellowship of the devout Jew. It applied not just to those who had abused the written Torah (Luke 7.37, 39 - a prostitute?; cf. Matt 21.32), but to tax collectors (Luke 19.7; cf. Matt. 5.46 with Luke 6.32), and it would seem also to other trades which put the practitioner beyond the pale of what was deemed acceptable (Mark 2.15-17; Matt. 11.19; Luke 7.34; Luke 15.1-2).**

**Here we are evidently once again back in an area where the limits of acceptability were being determined by the multiplying halakoth of the Pharisaic rabbis. That is to say, not just disobedience to the Torah but disregard for the rabbinic rulings on what obedience to the Torah entailed, that was what showed a person to be a sinner. This has become more explicit in the Mishnah: a sinner (rasa) is one who treats halakic rulings lightly (m. Edayyot 5.6; m. Abot 4.7; 5.14).**

**Given that so much of the Pharisaic teaching of our period was concerned with the limits of acceptable table fellowship, and given that the context of Galatians 2.15 is a dispute precisely about whether and under what circumstances a devout Jew could have table-fellowship with Gentiles, the presumption becomes compellingly strong that "sinners" in verse 15 belongs to the same range of usage.**

***That is, "sinners" was a word used of the Gentile believers by the men from James to express their disagreement or dismay at the table-fellowship being practiced by Peter and the other Jewish believers.***

**And it had the connotation of 'unclean' (= Gentile = sinner), one who by his very race was legally disqualified from participating in the table-fellowship of a faithful Jew: 'How could you Peter, a true-born Jew, have table--fellowship with a Gentile sinner?'**

# THE GOSPEL OF PAUL…..VS….THE GOSPEL OF YESHUA .....THE FINAL WORD!

**The men from James came with the authority of the Jerusalem Church and found fault at table-fellowship with the non-Jews and Peter, Barnabas, and Paul because "necessary" Commandments were being violated under the authority of Paul at Antioch.**

**In reality the Acts 15 Council was called to do only two things:**

- **The Messianic Jews were to repent of forcing all non-Jews to be circumcised before coming to God**
- **They Messianic Church of Jerusalem, and James, corrected the teachings of Paul as he was teaching his own Gospel which led both Jews and non-Jews to break their Covenant and its Covenant stipulations.**

**Rom 2:16 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. (KJV)**

**Rom 16:25 25 Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel.**

**Answer for yourself: Forgive me but was not Paul supposed to be teaching Jesus' Gospel?**

**Those who follow Pauline Christianity instead of the faith of Yeshua still are breaking many of their Covenant responsibilities and stipulations today in the Christian Church. We must no longer follow Pauline Christianity over the "Christianity of Yeshua". Dear one, the Gospel of Paul is not the Gospel of Yeshua. They clash and conflict. And table-fellowship is only where it starts as it can be shown that Paul's Gospel contradicts the teachings of Jesus and his religious belief system in numerous places; even in serious matters like atonement and redemption! You may have never noticed this in reading the New Testament, but your failure to discern this does not mean it does not exist! Truly, these two "Gospels" oppose each other in basic tenants. It is to these very issues and the need of repentance in these areas where me must now consider if we expect to be held in good standing within the "true" Church of Yeshua.**

**Shalom and blessings.**

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# CONTRASTING THE GOSPEL OF PAUL VS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS #1

**Many of you probably are startled at the at the title of these articles but let me assure you that when you are finished reading just these three presentations, you will begin to see deeper into the deceptions and the "message" of the New Testament than ever before. You may not be aware of it but there are "two" conflicting messages or gospels contained in the New Testament; one of which agrees 100% with Biblical Judaism and the religion of Yeshua the Jew and one totally alien to it which is patterned after Gentile pagan religions. With such new perspectives made plain for you then you will come to personally recognize that there are two completely conflicting messages and doctrines in the New Testament which are presented as the "ONLY" way to inherit Eternal Life. One of them is therefore wrong; the problem for the New Testament believer today is to not only recognize that "conflicting gospels" exist within the teachings of the New Testament, but arriving at an intelligent decision regarding which "gospel" to accept and which "gospel" to shun. Often I hear some who write us or call us at the Ministry try to respond that "there is no contradiction" within the New Testament. Such shallow perspective by good-hearted people will be shown to be foolish let alone critically flawed in these next three articles. I would hope you muster up the courage to deal with what will be shown to you in the following pages as often the material will be "heavy" and one's "heroes" often exposed for what they really were: false teachers and Apostles who opposed the real message of Yeshua the Jew. Now let us seriously sanctify the Name of the LORD by studying in earnest the revelation of HaShem as it has come down to us; all the while picking the "meat" from the "bones" as we find it in the New Testament.**

## UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN MESSAGE IN THE PARABLE ABOUT THE GOOD SAMARITAN

**Answer for yourself: We have all heard of the "Good Samaritan" but have we all understood the real message of this parable?**

**This is the question before us as the implications from such in-depth study challenge the validity of the New Testament and Gentile Christianity's teachings regarding inheriting Eternal Life in many places.**

**I will begin with what is known as the Parable of the Good Samaritan, but will rename it " The Parable of the Priest, the Levite and the Samaritan."**

**The parable is chiefly remembered by most for what it is taught as in Bible classes: as a lesson to be kind to your neighbors and to alleviate suffering. But these lessons are incidental only, and of quite secondary in importance to the main issue which the parable teaches; the main issue in the parable escapes the awareness of most readers and in reality concerns the very foundation of the religion of Yeshua and is not concerned with just "loving" others. True, the parable is the gem of the narrative; but its value, nevertheless, is in the setting of it, and not in the lesson of kindliness which it incidentally inculcates. We must**

go beyond the surface and its elementary meanings understood by most to grasp the real intent Yeshua meant when he taught it.

***The Gentile Christian Church desperately needs to hear this message and repent of many of their doctrinal positions which oppose the real meaning of this parable.***

## NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION BEFORE WE START

**To understand the real and full significance of this parable we must note what has led up to it. A lawyer came to heckle Yeshua. Like every great reformer, Yeshua had his opponents, great and small. There were those who were uncompromisingly hostile either from a mental bias or from personal motives. There were the sectarians who opposed the new and deeper teachings of Yeshua on doctrinal grounds. And there were those who claimed to be liberal-minded, but who regarded the doctrines preached by Yeshua as far-fetched, utopian and altogether impracticable.**

**To this latter class belonged, evidently, the lawyer who stood up and " tempted " Yeshua, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ? "**

**Answer for yourself: What was the core issue addressed in the previous questions poised to Yeshua?**

## HOW TO INHERIT "ETERNAL LIFE" ACCORDING TO YESHUA

**Every believer desires to inherit Eternal Life. This is beyond question. But you will be amazed to find out that it is not as easy as you have been taught. Read on please.**

We are talking about "eternal life" and Yeshua's understanding of God's salvation. We must not loose sight of this for the parable of the Good Samaritan is really about how to obtain "salvation" and inherit "eternal life". **You will better understand as we delve further into the parable and Yeshua's message within it.**

**Notice up front, that the lawyer who asked Yeshua the question about "eternal life" did not ask the question as one desiring to be instructed, but**"temptingly." It was a challenge, as from one knowing what answer he would get and who is prepared to oppose Yeshua if he were to answer the question incorrectly; as if Yeshua had some strange doctrine considering "salvation". But in this he was mistaken. In answering Yeshua simply referred him to the Law…the same Law that Gentile Christianity today teaches has "passed away": "What is written in the law ? How readest thou?"

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find that somewhat surprising; that Yeshua would teach a vital relationship between receiving Eternal Life and the keeping of the Law; something the Gentile Christian Church prides itself in having been "abolished" according to Paul and his writings?**

**Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua really connect "eternal life" with the "Law" and what does that mean to the Christian who believes he is "under grace and not under Law"?**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather odd that obtaining "eternal life" for Yeshua involved the "Law" when the Christian Church today, which considers themselves followers of Yeshua and "ambassadors for Christ," pride themselves as not being "under the Law" and even call the Law a "curse"?**

**Answer for yourself: The most serious question is: "Has the Gentile Christian Church" of today inherited the "traditions" of Rome for their salvation message and completely rejected the true "salvation message of God"**

**which involves man's responsibilities to the "Law" of the Old Testament [the Laws of Noah and the Laws of Moses]? The answer is “yes”. Let us read on.**

## SCRUTINY OF THE PARABLE…LOOK WHAT WE FIND

**The lawyer rattled off: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."**

**Answer for yourself: Is your understanding of Christianity's "salvation" as you have been taught by the Gentile Church the same as we read in the above discourse? Is your understanding of Christianity's "salvation" the same as Yeshua both understood and taught it? Before you rush to say "yes" I would suggest you wait till the following articles have been read and digested before you answer in the affirmative as we will address each word of the above answer in the Hebrew to make sure we understand completely what Yeshua was saying.**

***And Yeshua said to him: Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:27-28).***

**The narrative goes on to say that the lawyer, willing to justify himself, said unto Yeshua, " And who is my neighbor "**

## WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

**Here let us pause for a moment to analyze the situation. It will be noticed as we examine the parable that the lawyer's question, "And who is my neighbor?" will culminate in Yeshua referring to the Commandments within the Second Tablet of the Law only, whereas the reply of Yeshua, "this do," made no such discrimination but referred to both tablets of the law. This might seem rather strange at present but I assure you that you will quickly come to understand Yeshua's intentions and answer as we let "his mind be in us". This is done only by studying the Jewish Roots of Gentile Christianity. To appreciate the meaning of the lawyer's question as to "who was neighbor" we must understand the issue about which the lawyer intended to heckle Yeshua.**

- **It is mandatory we understand that the First Tablet of the Law contained the commandments and obligations given to man concerning maintaining his relationship with God. In other words these commandments were "vertical"; between man and God. These commandments dealt with man's relationship with God and when obeyed guaranteed man's continued acceptance with God. These were manifestations of man's Covenant stipulations whereby if observed "kept" man in good relationship with God within his respective Covenant.**
- **The Second Tablet of the Law contained the commandments and obligations given to man concerning man's relationship with man [remember mankind is created in the Divine image of God]. These "horizontal" commandments, when observed, guaranteed man's rightness with his brothers and neighbors and thereby his "rightness" with God as had the prior commandments from the First Table of the Law. Ironically, man's worst relationship with others is a direct indication of his "best" relationship with God.**

**Yeshua next said something very interesting; he said that the "second" was "LIKE" the "first". Let me explain further. Man was created in the image of Ha Shem and when we relate to mankind we are in reality relating to God at the same time for mankind carries the Divine Image. Thus the relationship between the "Two Tablets of the Law".**

**There were two "laws" or "commandments" which were fundamental in Jewish philosophy. These were "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" and "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Again this is the picture for us in the**

**"Two Tablets of the Law". In both ways, when we are observing and obeying the commandments in both Tablets of the Law, we are loving God. It has been said that our "worst relationship with man" is a direct picture of our "best relationship with God". Many but not all of the Sadducees, Scribes and the Pharisees— that is, the religious ruling classes—laid all the emphasis on the "FIRST" tablet of the Law and Yeshua laid all the emphasis on the "SECOND" tablet of the Law and its commandments.**

## *This is the secret to the whole parable and has momentous importance in one's understanding of "inheriting Eternal Life".*

**The "Pharisees" interpreted the "love of God" to mean prayer, adulation, sacrifice and worship. These religious leaders glorified God in a manner that would gratify a human despot. As for the second commandment, it was entirely subordinate and its fulfillment consisted at best in almsgiving. Yeshua, on the other hand, regarded the second commandment as arising out of the first, and, therefore, as its corollary. There was no way of loving God except by taking care of his children (mankind). God was the Father of us all. We must hallow him in His fatherhood: "Our Father . . . hallowed be thy Name." This can only be done by a full recognition of our brotherhood. "One is your Master and all ye are brethren." This idea of the Fatherhood of God of all mankind is the foundation of all Yeshua's precepts and teachings. It was the will of "our Father which is in heaven" that none of his children should suffer at the hands of each other. "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, ye have done it unto me." "If any offend one of these little ones, better a millstone were hung round his neck, and that he were drowned at the bottom of the sea." Or again, " If thou bring thy sacrifice to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and be reconciled first to thy brother." Thus, and thus only, can you glorify your "Father which is in heaven. Therefore THE FIRST COMMANDMENT CAN BE FULFILLED ONLY BY THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SECOND. This is the pivot of all Yeshua's teaching, and it is on this point that Yeshua met with the strongest opposition.**

**This led to quibblings as to the relative importance of the two commandments, the first, on which the "scribes and Pharisees" relied; or the second, on which centered the teaching of Yeshua and which he contended was " like unto the first."**

## *When, therefore, Yeshua simply referred the lawyer to "the law," he made no distinction as between the first and second commandment, for to Yeshua the two meant one and the same thing.*

**Not so, however, with the lawyer. Not having received the answer in the form in which he had expected it, and " willing to justify himself," be said to Yeshua, " And who is my neighbor? That is, he took up Yeshua on the second commandment, evidently trying to show the impracticability of his teaching.**

**And now came for answer the illuminating parable, which I will quote in full:**

**Luke 10:30-36**

- **30 And Yeshua answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.**
- **31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.**
- **32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.**
- **33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,**
- **34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and**

**brought him to an inn, and took care of him.**

- **35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.**
- **36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? (KJV)**

**Reluctantly and evasively the lawyer admitted, " He that showed mercy on him." Again he was made to answer his own question.**

**But the chief significance of the parable he evaded, as do most of our Bible expositors of to-day. Nor, had it been the object of Yeshua merely to teach the lawyer that "he that showed mercy was neighbor," Yeshua could have chosen any three men for his parable, whereas he selected on purpose a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan.**

**It is just in the selection of the characters that the importance of the lesson is comprised. For the first man whom Yeshua made to pass by on the other side was a priest, a man of prayer and fasting, of rites and ceremonials, looked upon as holy by his people. The second man was a patrician, equally punctilious in all the rituals of the synagogue. And the third ? A despised alien, a Gentile, an unbeliever, a pariah, loathed by every self-respecting Jew in those days as is a "minority" to-day in Christian America.**

**Among these Yeshua bade the lawyer to choose:**

> **"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor to him that fell among thieves?"**

**The lawyer cleverly evaded the main issue by ignoring the status of the three persons named, and according his verdict to " him that showed mercy." To say outright, "The Samaritan, was perhaps too much to expect. He could not so debase priest and patrician, co-religionists and compatriots, as to prefer a Samaritan to them by name.**

## IS THE HEART OF YOUR FAITH "CREED" OR "DEED"?

**But, the lawyer had to admit more than he was probably aware of at the time, and that is, that religion of deed comes before profession of creed. And that is the lesson of the "Parable of the Priest, the Levite and Samaritan." To speak of it as the "Parable of the Good Samaritan" only is to ignore its chief lesson.**

***Yeshua explained to the lawyer, and to us, what his religion was: Creed, mental assent to religious "dogmas" and "doctrines", prayer and fasting; patriotism, race, nationality, clanship; wealth and social position; were all brushed aside so as to accord place of honor to a good deed, even though performed by one of the least of the sons of " our Father which is in heaven."***

***In the view of Yeshua conventional piety, unsupported by good conduct, counted for nothing; whilst a good deed did not lose anything of its merits because performed by a person not belonging to a particular or to any sect.***

**We shall see further on that the absence of creed and ascent to "denominational belief systems" was an essential feature of the religion of Yeshua, as in true religion it is bound to be. Such reliance on "creed" by Gentile Christianity, is the very heart of Gentile Christianity today and it should not be. You have to admit that you are either "in or out", "accepted or rejected" in Christianity by what you "believe" more than what you "do". At altar after altar, Sunday after Sunday, multitudes of people seeking God are led to "accept the current theology" of this church or that church and reassured that if they "believe" they shall be saved. The problem is what one is taught to "believe" changes between churches. Literally the Christian Church, due to the misunderstanding of Paul's epistles, rely on acceptance of "creed" over "deed" for salvation. Yeshua did not agree with them. Think!**

**This narrative is by no means an isolated passage, but one out of many, all to the same purpose. As our investigation proceeds it will be seen that Yeshua never uttered a word that is ever so remotely inconsistent with the spirit displayed in this brief but telling narrative. That there are many sayings in the Gospels attributed to Yeshua which are diametrically opposed to it is, of course, admitted and problematic to the discriminating reader. But too few study to this level to see such things. But we shall not find it difficult to show that all such passages are doubtful as today's scholars teach us. Dear one, we have two conflicting messages in the Gospels concerning "obtaining Eternal Life" and if you have not seen such conflicting dogmas then either you have not looked deep enough or you don't study enough" Superficial reading of the Bible profits little.**

**In this parable we have the key to the religion of Yeshua. Traditional Gentile Christian theology extracts nothing more from this parable than an exhortation to be kind and to succour the weak. Blinded by its own dogmas, it never noticed the two leading principles that inspired it, that are the essence of it, and that must be the basis of true religion, if a true religion is possible at all. These are its universalism and its tendency to unity, concord and fellowship, in sharp contrast to the discordant and disruptive tendencies of the creeds which theology has evolved.**

**We will but briefly note these at present, for we shall see these two principles permeating the philosophy of Yeshua.**

**Take, for instance, the lesson just noticed which Yeshua imparted to an antagonist. The lawyer asked, "Who is my neighbor ?" Yeshua made him answer his own question and in a way he neither anticipated nor intended.**

**In this instance a bigoted Jew had to answer his own question contrary to his prejudices. We might submit the same problem, thus clearly stated, to Brahmin, Buddhist, Mohammedan or Freethinker with the same result. Its catholicity is clearly due to the total absence of any suggestion of theology, creed or dogma.**

**Even the name of the author might be eliminated without weakening the force of the lesson; for the fact that Yeshua was the propounder of it clearly could not weigh in its favor with the heckling antagonist. It is characteristic of all the precepts of Yeshua that they intrinsically make for unity, peace and concord, without needing any other support.**

***Obviously there can be but one true religion, and therefore such a religion—if possible at all—must tend to unite mankind. Indeed, this is the test whereby to distinguish true religion from its counterfeits: "By their fruits ye shall know them."***

**Answer for yourself: What are the fruits of the pseudo-religions with which we are acquainted—not excepting any ?**

**They are known to history as religions dissensions, religious feuds, religious wars, religious frauds, and even as religious crimes. Surely no sadder commentary is possible on the general conception of religion than the linking of the word with ideas which stand for its opposite, without anybody being shocked by the incongruity of the combinations, or the paradoxes which they suggest. Such blindness affects the Christian Church yet today.**

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE….SAME MESSAGE

**Matt 22:36-40**

- **36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?**
- **37 Yeshua said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**
- **38 This is the first and great commandment.**
- **39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.**
- **40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (KJV)**

**On a certain other occasion another lawyer asked Yeshua—also " temptingly "—" Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law ?"**

**Except for the purpose of challenging a statement or an argument, there would be no sense in asking this question of a Jew; as well ask him whether he knows his own name.**

**Nor was Yeshua an ordinary Jew, or considered such by the heckling lawyer, who addressed him as “rabbi," i.e. " teacher." To assume, therefore, that the lawyer merely wanted to find out whether Yeshua knew the commandment is too absurd for even a moment's consideration. Moreover, the narrator plainly says that the question was asked " temptingly," which in itself indicates that an argument was at issue between the lawyer and Yeshua. The context not only shows this to have been the case, but from the answer of Yeshua, as well as the conversation that followed it, we are able to gather the nature of the argument.**

**As I have already been pointed out, Yeshua laid great stress on the second commandment—" Love thy neighbor as thyself;" whereas the " scribes and Pharisees" held the first to be the supreme law. Hence the challenge of the lawyer, as if saying, "In your concern for mankind you are forgetting God. Do you not know the great commandment in the law ?"**

**In answering Yeshua recited the law and then added: "This is the first and great commandment. By the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."**

**This makes sense of a narrative which, in the form in which it is presented in the English Version, is meaningless. There Yeshua is made to say, "And the second is like unto it"—rendering the Greek particle “de" by the conjunction "and" instead of the argumentative particle "but"—which robs the passage of its meaning. For it is not likely that Yeshua would have thought it necessary to inform an exponent of the law what the wording of the second commandment was.**

**Yeshua said the “second” commandment is “like” the first. Let us see his thought by examining the word “like” in the Greek”:**

**3664 homoios- like, similar, resembling:**

- **a) like: that is, resembling**
- **b) like: that is, corresponding to a thing**

**You can see for yourself that to Yeshua the “second” commandment corresponds and resembles the first.**

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE

**Mark 12:31**

**31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (KJV)**

**This, or a similar incident, is also recorded in Mark, the wording being slightly different. Yeshua is there said to have added, " There is none other commandment greater than these two."**

**There is no contradiction in the two accounts, but rather corroboration. Very probably both versions are correct, the different wordings having been used on different occasions. The accusation that Yeshua was ignoring the great law, and that he was teaching heretical and revolutionary doctrines, could not have been an isolated occurrence, but must have followed him to the cross. As constant must have been his reiterations that "the second law was like unto the first." Had the incident occurred once only, it would scarcely have survived**

**or been handed down to us. Common to all these accounts we find Yeshua emphasizing "deed" over "creed" and let us not forget that the religious leaders of his time had influenced just the opposite ("creed" over "deed" just the way Christianity does today!).**

**According to Mark: there was a dramatic sequel to this episode. The lawyer was struck by the answer and the interpretation Yeshua gave to the two commandments. " And the scribe said unto him, "Well, Teacher, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Yeshua saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God (Mark: 12: 32-34).**

## "DO THIS AND LIVE"….SURE IS DIFFERENT FROM "BELIEVE IN OUR DENOMINATIONAL BELIEFS AND LIVE"

**Note the consistency with his reply given to the other lawyer: ''Thou hast said right, this do and thou shalt live." That is, obey the two commandments "and live".**

**And now again when this lawyer says that the observance of these two laws "is more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices," Yeshua said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God"; "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"; and "There is none greater than these two commandments." True, indeed, that he had not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill.**

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND WHAT IT MEANT TO YESHUA

**But now we must digress in order to restore to the phrase… "kingdom of God"… its original meaning and to correct a grave blunder committed by the early Christians, that has been perpetuated to this day in the Christian Church. The Greek word " basileia," here and elsewhere translated "kingdom," has two meanings. Like the English word " dominion " it may refer to the role of a king (which is the original meaning of the word) or, metaphorically, to the territory ruled over.**

**Yeshua never used the phrase in any other sense than "the rule of God " or "reign of God," as is clear in each case from the context. When, for instance, he said to the lawyer "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God," the phrase can have meaning only if Yeshua meant—-as evidently he did mean—that the lawyer was not far removed from the "rule " or "law " of God.**

**Dear Christian believer, if you have understood what I have shown you so far as to what Yeshua believed and taught as opposed to the "accepted" religious theology of his day, then this has vital importance for you although you might not have realized it. If your standing in your faith and your "salvation" is founded on your mental belief concerning "this" theology or "that" theology about Yeshua which was created by Paul and the Roman church through successive centuries and successive Catholic Church Councils, if it is founded on your mental belief that your "salvation is based on your belief in the doctrine that Yeshua "died for your sins" and "rose from the dead" then understand that your "mental assertion to such religious dogmas is not "deed" but "creed". And within Christianity this is rampant to the neglect of the real message of Yeshua regarding Eternal Life where "deed" is more important than "creed" or "mental belief". It is obvious from the teachings of Yeshua that merely by agreeing, accepting, or assenting to a proposition or a "religious belief or dogma" that one (the lawyer in the story) could not be any nearer to a locality. This is a false salvation if you trust the teachings of Yeshua and not the teachings of others. Compare also "Thy kingdom (i.e. 'rule' or 'reign') come: Thy will be *done* on earth," etc.**

**The Gospels are full of such blundering errors of translation and misinterpretation—sometimes due**

to the ignorance of the scribes and sometimes on purpose because of Gentile theological bias which were carried over from their past pagan religious beliefs which were transferred and attached to the figure of Yeshua as he was "transformed" into the image of their past gods and godmen. This might be news to you but serious study into these difficult areas, areas which makes the student's task often very tedious, will result in such an undeniable conclusion. Right now many will disagree but they have not evaluated the vast amount of existing evidence for themselves. I have and so have hundreds of Christian and Jewish scholars who will tell you the truth on the matter. You might not find such materials in Joshua's Christian Book Stores or at Zondervans, but this does not mean such overwhelingly convincing evidence does not exist. Bet Emet Ministries stands in the gap to instruct in sound doctrine, reprove, rebuke, and exhort in order that you might find yourself in the true faith of Yeshua and not in a counterfeit faith that has apostasized from the truth.

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE

**Matt 19:16**

**16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (KJV)**

**A certain ruler came saying, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"'**

**Not temptingly this time, but with desire for information.**

**Three of the Gospels record this incident- Matthew, Mark, and Luke; and, barring verbal differences, their agreement as to everything that is essential leaves little to be desired. He was not a heckler. According to all the accounts this man was genuinely desirous of knowing what he should do to inherit eternal life.** Notice that he knew what most Christians today do not know; that there are things to "do" for Eternal Life. Read the passage again and try to convince yourself that "do" should have been " believe" as Paul would have it. It says "do" in all three Synoptic Gospels. **He was a true disciple, for we are told that Yeshua, beholding him, " loved him."** Therefore, if ever there was an occasion or an opportunity in the whole career of Yeshua to declare his scheme of salvation, if there was even a time in the ministry of Yeshua to teach Pauline doctrine that only those who will come to trust in his soon coming death and resurrection for the payment of their sins and thereby inherit Eternal Life by "believing" in what he was soon to accomplish, surely this was the supreme moment. **Yeshua does not say such; in fact he says just the OPPOSITE!** And for myself I have not the least doubt that he did do so, and that his answer is correctly reported as his answer cuts to the very core of his faith. Yeshua's answer is the very heart of what Judaism had taught for thousands of years concerning "salvation" and "obtaining Eternal Life". Dear one consistency is proof of this as the three Synoptic Gospels stand in complete unity about this as opposed to the Hellenistic Gospel of John which has hundreds of Gentile "footprints" to which the uninformed reader misses when he reads it. In the first place Yeshua rebuked the disciple for giving him a distinctive predicate: "Why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, that is God." If you were a Jew then you would know that "good" was a euphemism for YHVH and there is only One God and Only One Good….YHVH. This is a "key" that Gentile readers of the Gospel of John, uninitiated with the facts of the Jewish faith fail to catch. Then he gave him this simple direction: " Keep the commandments." Again the consistency with all I have shown you so far from the various teachings of Yeshua concerning obtaining Eternal Life.

***"Which?" asked the disciple, and the answer was explicit: " Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt***

***not bear false witness, Honor thy father and mother, anti Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'' (Mat. 14:16-21).***

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice anything in Yeshua's answer that was missing from what you have been taught by Gentile Christianity today regarding how to obtain Eternal Life?**

**There is not one word about believing any religious dogma or belief for obtaining Eternal Life! No hint about the necessity of baptism for inheriting Eternal Life. There is not even an intimation about attendance at the synagogue or about going to "Church" for receiving Eternal Life. There is not one hint about burnt offerings, blood sacrifices, fastings, or believing in the forthcoming resurrection or death on the cross that is connected by Yeshua with obtaining and inheriting Eternal Life. One would think that if these issues were integral and necessary for Eternal Life then Yeshua would have taught so. To any less is incriminating to the character of one believed by many to be Messiah or God no less. Surely Yeshua did not have amnesia.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Yeshua out to mislead us? Why did he not refer to the Pauline doctrines of salvation that would be developed later and later connected with his death if they would be "necessary" for obtaining Eternal Life as the Gentile Church teaches us today?**

**Answer for yourself: Could it be possible that Yeshua knew that such doctrines that would be later espoused later by the Gentile Church and taught in his "name" as necessary for salvation and Eternal Life were pagan to the core and pre-existed him by thousands of years and had absolutely no place within Biblical faith, Sinai, Israel, or the saving God of Israel? You bet he did. That is why you don't find such things as taught by Yeshua in the Synoptic Gospels when he was asked of Eternal Life.**

**Dear ones this is the problem that most Christians today are confronted with when they study. If you study long enough you will encounter the truth about Yeshua. You have believed in a book handed down to you by Rome which is a propagandist mixture of pagan religious doctrines and Gnosticism blended with a little truth from Biblical Judaism. Anti-Semitic Roman theology has created a hybrid Yeshua whereby he is pictured in the New Testament both as a Zeus and an anointed Jewish Rabbi positioned to be the Messiah of Israel. Well-intentioned people have put their whole faith into what the New Testament teaches never noticing the many outstanding contradictions concerning doctrine after doctrine. Dear one it is these "doctrines" which when "believed" lead to "doing". We either do it right or we do it wrong. If we do it wrong because we are led astray by much in the New Testament then we sin. By declaring the New Testament "inspired, infallible, and inerrant" we have taken from most the initiative to study thereby falsely assuring its readers that it is "truth" from page to page. No one ever approaches the New Testament desiring to prove it wrong. I did not. It was only after consistent study over the years that these things surfaced to my understanding. Like most I wanted to "believe" and accepted everything in the New Testament as "true". I was "saved". The more I studied Yeshua the Jew and his faith did I begin to see the irregularities and contradictions within it concerning Eternal Life. Over time I began to see that Paul and Yeshua disagreed on their "salvation" messages. Over time I began to see that the New Testament pitted "creed" against "deed" as connected with Eternal Life. Over time I began to see how the Gospel of John was a total denial and contradictions of the Synoptic Gospels regarding obtaining Eternal Life which stressed "deed" over "creed". As I later began in-depth study in comparative religions I was horrified to find the "Christ story" repeated over and over again in almost every Gentile pagan religion that existed prior to the time of Yeshua's life. Everywhere I turned and looked at pre-existing pagan religions I found scattered over the world, in almost every country and in every time period, Pauline New Testament doctrines which I had grown up in Christianity accepting as "Gospel truth" for my salvation. I soon came to realize I was a "creedal Christian" which held dear to himself hundreds of pagan beliefs that had nothing to do with the Jewish Yeshua. I was a follower of a Roman Yeshua. Such a "Yeshua"**

**never existed. I had been deceived. Fifteen years of intense study had paid off for me; but what about you?**

**You can either read this article and discount it completely or you can open you mind that you need to begin serious study in order to prove you yourself what I have shown you to be true in time for your repentance before you die and meet the God you love who never gave you such "beliefs" in the first place. The choice is yours.**

**Again, not a word was mentioned by Yeshua about "believing" this or that for Eternal Life.**

**Answer for yourself: Or shall we suppose that such instruction had been given, but had been lost in the transmission?**

**Answer for yourself: Is the account as it has reached us perhaps incomplete ? Not so. The narrative does not leave us in any doubt for we have two other Gospels in complete agreement on the issue. Besides that, it goes on to say that the young man, wishing to be certain about his duties, said: " All these I do already, what lack I yet? "**

***Yeshua said that if he wanted to he perfect, all he could do was to sell what he had, give it to the poor, and help him to preach the SAME gospel to the rest of mankind.***

**Answer for yourself: Now do you think you have been taught the "same" Gospel Yeshua taught or a substitute one?**

**There is not only agreement between these scattered narratives, in sharp contrast to the tenor of the rest of the Gospels, but a most remarkable consistency of aim and purpose--not merely as between the three incidents we have noticed, but also with the exhortations of the Sermon on the Mount, which—by universal admission—constitute the essence of the teachings of Yeshua.**

**Here as elsewhere—that is, in those portions of the Gospels which in style and diction no less than in doctrine are so easily distinguishable from the rest—Yeshua is laying emphasis on what he himself calls " the greatest of all commandments": " Love thy neighbor as thyself." In so doing, that is, in loving our " neighbors," whosoever they may be, we are hallowing the Fatherhood of God.**

**Rites and ceremonials were of no account at all. This is what the Catholic Church is all about…"creed" for salvation. Before you begin to bash Catholics understand Protestantism is little better. Understand that rites and ceremonies were not condemned, but at the same time were admissible only after clue observance of the Law. Every trespass against a fellow-man, even the slightest, was an error which no amount of prayer or sacrifice could condone.**

**All his precepts and all his arguments are centered around this principle. Our ideal was to be God, the Father which is in heaven: "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust."**

**Contrast now with these pure and sublime teachings the following words which are put into the mouth of Yeshua by the Gentile redactors of the Gospel of Mark:**

**"And he [Yeshua] said unto tract, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall he saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." I may point out that it is known to me that it has been questioned whether Mark wrote the verses in which this passage occurs. But if he did not, some other scribe did; and the words summarize well the basic doctrine of Christianity.**

**Compare this illogical, incomprehensible and brutal decree with the reasoned, humane and gentle exhortation: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse yolk, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which its in heaven."**

***"Love your enemies, bless them that curse yolk, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which its in heaven."***

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible to believe that the same teacher, so consistent, so clear and logical, and so meticulously just and gentle as is the author of the Sermon on the Mount could have pronounced so unutterably absurd a decree ?**

**Answer for yourself: What, if we accept this as genuine, are we to make of the other injunction which bids us to be "like our leather which is in heaven" ["deed" again…remember?]? The proposition is too absurd for serious argument.**

**Dear one take this to heart and understand that Gentile Christianity today follows a religious beliefs system that in most parts is totally alien to what the true historical Yeshua actually believed and taught men were to do to inherit Eternal Life. Decide today to come to know the historical Yeshua the Jew; follow him and expose the lies taught in the name of the Roman Zeus. Shalom.**

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# CONTRASTING THE GOSPEL OF PAUL VS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS #2

**In the previous article I provoked you thoughts by showing you that the New Testament consists of competing and conflicting Gospels….one from Yeshua which stresses "deed" over "creed" to inherit Eternal Life and one from Paul which stresses "creed" over "deed" for Eternal Life. One is wrong and one is right!**

**It is not difficult to trace Paul's conversion and the genesis of his philosophy out of his own writings. His mind at the time when he journeyed to Damascus was obsessed by two sets of ideas: the heresy of the Nazarenes and the Scriptures. Paul would later come to find out he was wrong and the Nazarenes, instead of being a heresy, was indeed orthodoxy. That was not the only thing Paul is wrong about as we are seeing. We have deal with Paul extensively at many of our websites; in particular the most important of them all: http://paulproblem.faithweb.com. Yet in fairness to Paul, there is a great chance that much of his writings and thoughts were "reworked" by Rome in the production of the New Testament as many of his beliefs have a closer affinity to paganism than Judaism. The "re-working" of Paul and the continued theological writing in "Paul's name" is undeniable when one if confronted with the facts but yet this does not remove Paul from his synthesis of Gnosticism and Pagan Mysteries in his own presentation of Yeshua to the Gentile nations.**

**As his zeal drove him from place to place hunting for heretics, his restless brain must have been actively searching the Scriptures for arguments to confound these dissenters from orthodoxy, with the result—-as happens so often in like circumstances—-that suddenly the other side of the proverbial "coin" flashed into view and gave a new direction to his thoughts. This is what I hope happens to our readers when provoked to deeper thought than usual when confronted with undeniable facts which expose the fallacy of faith in fiction.**

**Paul was present at the stoning of Stephen, and heard the latter's defense of his belief. He must have listened to many such speeches and arguments (based on Scripture texts) from those of the sect whom he hunted down and dragged before the priestly tribunals. Their arguments are bound to have left impressions on his mind, which gradually would create doubts as to his own beliefs.**

**If at any time such a doubt arose in Paul's mind— and we know that it did arise—there was but one way of settling it; namely by the Scriptures.**

**We have seen what were Paul's conclusions and the kind of arguments on which these were based. The Messiah, it occurred to him, had been promised; therefore that promise "needs must have been fulfilled." There was no getting over that " fact." Not only had Paul nothing more substantial to start with or to build upon, but it would have been quite impossible to suggest to him anything more convincing or reliable than Scripture prophecy. For him—at that time--there was, and there could be, no more solid fact. In later years Paul would substitute his own gospel for the Scriptures (Ignatius Singer, The Rival Philosophies of Jesus and of Paul, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., p. 26)**

**Once such a thought has taken root in a mind like Paul's, all the rest is bound to follow as mere matter of logic. There is no objection that cannot be met, nor contradiction that cannot be explained-according to the scriptures. The Messiah had been promised, so that promise must have been fulfilled.**

**But who was the Messiah for Paul? There seems to have been some doubt at first whether this distinction belonged to John the Baptist or to Jesus. It was settled, if not by Paul then by someone before him, in the only way in which everything relating to Christ has been settled from the days of Paul down to our own time: "It is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Mark 1:2) That settled it. John came first, so he was the messenger and therefore Jesus was the Messiah.**

**But no sooner had one such difficulty been solved than others cropped up, which kept Paul busy all his life-and others after him to the present day. It was satisfactorily settled that Jesus was Christ the Saviour. But, being Saviour, he should have saved. Yeshua died, however, and left things pretty much as he found them. Shall it be said then that Christ has failed in his mission? " God forbid," says Paul; let us search the Scriptures.**

**Paul never went to that oracle in vain. He discovered what till then had been hidden from all the wise, Jesus included, that in and through Adam all have sinned: and so he argued that "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:21-22).**

**Therefore, according to Paul, Jesus saved us by dying for our sins. His death was the act of salvation: he gave himself as a ransom. Notice however, according to Paul, Jesus died not, however, for everybody, but for those ONLY who believed in him. I sure would not have wanted to live in the first century, say in Iceland, because if I had, according to Paul, the chance of the news of Yeshua's death for my sin surely most likely would not have arrived in Iceland in time for my consideration. Most likely, not having radio or television in the first century, I would have died in Iceland never hearing such a "gospel" and the inability of Jesus to make sure such a "necessary" message we be taken to me would have surely doomed me. Somehow the "necessary" part of this is such a stretch to the serious thinker that the capriciousness of Yeshua is at stake.**

**As if that was not enough, as stated in the first article when one investigates Gentile pagan religions one finds that such "necessary" tenants in Pauline theology for Eternal Life were lifted straight out of pagan religions. It was this clever synthesis on Paul's doctrines patterned after pagan religious doctrines throughout the world that guaranteed the ease of the spread of Gentile Christianity as well as the easy of the Catholic Church's world-wide acceptance of Paul's Gospel since it had a little bit of something from everywhere which almost everyone who heard it was somewhat familiar. For Paul it was easy to get the Gentile nations to "accept" what they already believed in; the names of their gods and godmen were changed and Paul presented Yeshua in the "pattern" of which the Gentile nations were already familiar. Ironically the Gentile "believers" of the Pauline Gospel had to give nothing up to accept this "Jesus" as he was just another in a long line of godmen of which they were already familiar. The quotes of the early Church Fathers is startling as they admit that the Christian faith is little more than rehashed paganism!**

**Paul limits "salvation" to his "gospel" and to only those who "believed in it". This limitation was obviously necessary, or there would have been no further need for Paul or his gospel. Salvation, therefore, was made conditional on belief in the gospel of Paul. The true and conflicting Gospel of Yeshua, the Jew, was not taught by Paul. This is astounding but in all of Paul's writings he mentions only 2 of Yeshua's teachings (one sentence each), and after doing that, Paul is quick to bring his own interpretation on the matter as if we needed it. According to Paul, mankind were still in their sins, notwithstanding the ransom; but by "believing" and by "baptism" anybody could bring himself within the operation of this "new dispensation." This is where "faith" came in, and explains the necessity for the strangest of all doctrines, that faith counts for more than works ["creed" counts more than "deed"]. If you remember we proved in the first article in this series that this is not what Yeshua**

taught on the matter. The questions remains: "who will you trust for Eternal Life"…Paul or Yeshua?

**Following such reasoning it follows almost as a logical necessity that "he who believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he who believes not shall be damned." There you have it in a nutshell. Case closed!**

## *In this way Paul solved difficulty after difficulty, built up by successive stages his theory of salvation, and established his own authority above all else, in the end even over the Jewish Scriptures.*

**There were disappointments which, in the case of a less resourceful dialectician, might have proved fatal to such reasoning. His deductions did not always work out in fact as logic led him to anticipate. "Salvation," he taught, meant exemption from death. But nevertheless some of his "saints" died just like other folks. Such contrariness did not perturb Paul's faith in his own deductions any more than it would affect a theologian of today. The incident merely required explaining; and Paul "proved," quite satisfactorily it seems, to his misled followers, that in their case death was only a quickening process to prepare them for the new kingdom.**

**"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory (I. Cor. 15:51-54).**

**Thus what to most men would have meant a crushing defeat, Paul turned into a victory which enabled him to comfort his doubting followers. "For this we say unto youby the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I. Thess. 4:15-17).**

**Paul wants us to believe that his "gospel" is the word of the Lord. The Greek word is Strong's # 3056…Logos:**

- **1) of speech**
  - a) a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea
  - b) what someone has said
  - 1) a word
  - 2) the sayings of God
  - 3) decree, mandate or order
  - 4) used of the moral precepts given by God
  - 5) Old Testament prophecy given by the prophets
  - 6) what is declared, a thought, declaration, aphorism, a weighty saying, a dictum, a maxim

Notice that Paul is referencing his "vision" as the "word of the Lord". There is only one problem. This same Paul says in 2 Cor 13:1:

**1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. (KJV)**

We have Paul's own admonition that every Word from God must pass the test of being verified in the mouth of two or three witnesses. We simply do not find such a doctrine as espoused by Paul in the New Testament in the Old Testament or in the writings of the Prophets of the Old Testament. It is just not there; thus our problem. In fact just the opposite of what Paul taught is found in almost every book of the Old Testament and the Jewish Scriptures. Verification of Paul's doctrines, by two or three other witnesses as taught by Paul himself, are simply wanting. This brings into question the veracity

**of such a doctrine as taught by Paul.**

**According to Paul those who "are fallen asleep in the Lord" actually had a slight advantage over those who remained; for they, being already in possession of their new and incorruptible bodies, will have precedence over the others." Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:15-17).**

***The "comfort of these words " seems still necessary after about eighteen centuries of waiting! The comfort is necessary because the "teaching is wrong!"***

**Many other such difficulties cropped up, one after the other, but they all had to yield to Paul's irresistible logic. Whenever the facts were against his conclusions, so much the worse for the facts. And the Scriptures, the source of his inspiration and his sole authority, fared no better. When one has a through understanding of he Jewish Scriptures in the Hebrew, and these committed to memory, then when one approaches the Pauline corpus of literature in the New Testament, one finds hundreds of misquotations, mistranslation, verses taken completely out of context, as well as the lifting of parts of two or three Jewish passages and combining them in order that they say something completely different than what the original authors intended. This escapes most Christians who have not dedicated themselves to such intense study as I and others. When, for instance, he was spurned by the Jews (among whom he had only a scant following) and had to turn to the "heathen" to get a hearing—though still insisting on " the Jew first"—he had neither difficulty nor scruples in "proving" that "uncircumcision was no bar to salvation," since the Law no longer applied. For, he argued, "if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of none effect" (Rom. 4:14).**

**Answer for yourself: What "promise"? One made by Jesus?**

**Far from it. Jesus is never so much as quoted by this self-appointed apostle of "Christ." In Acts 20::35 Paul is represented as quoting from Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But nowhere in his epistles does he quote him.**

**It is another Scripture text which Paul had unearthed—-a "prophecy"—that had not the slightest bearing on the matter he was discussing, and the sole office of which was to lend support to his fanciful theories. Here is the "promise" as quoted by Paul: "its it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations" (Rom. 4:17). Therefore, argues Paul, "if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise to Abraham of none effect."**

**In this wise Paul argued difficulties out of his way, showing from the Scriptures how this or that proposition of his must needs be so, until, by a master-stroke, he proved— from the Scriptures—that the Scriptures were no longer of any account at all:**

- **"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom 10:4). "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).**
- **"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6).**
- **"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:4).**
- **"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom 6:14).**

**This is the way Paul met the objections of the Jews when they opposed Paul and used the Jewish Scriptures to counter his teachings. Not being able to meet their arguments, Paul got rid of the Scriptures themselves. According to Paul or the pro-Pauline author of the book of Hebrews as well as the pro-Pauline author of the third chapter of Galatians which was not in the original Galatians but added to the book well after 150A.D. and most likely after 180 A.D. by Irenaeus: The old "covenant" has lapsed and a new**

**one has taken it's place.**

- **In that he (God! says, A new covenant, He bath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:13).**
- **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Gal. 3:13).**
- **The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." (Gal. 3:24).**

**Answer for yourself: What is the problem with the verse as taken from Heb. 8:13?**

The word "covenant" is not present in the Greek manuscripts available to us today; in fact the context of the whole passage refers to the "priesthood" which disappeared after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. Many scholars understand and attest that Hebrews was written long after the 70 A.D. destruction of the Temple and priesthood and is not prophecy but back-written history that addressed the absence of the priesthood in the wake of the Temple's destruction. The "theology" of the Gentile church necessitated the insertion of the word "covenant" in order to complete it's replacement religion and the nullification of the Jews and their eternally valid covenant with HaShem. The Gentiles to whom this was taught knew no better quite like the Gentile church of today.

**So for sake of argument and since "covenant" has been added to the passages in our Christian Bible in the book of Hebrews (although in italics which indicate it's addition) then we must ask: What has taken its place? I will let Paul himself answer this question: " Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead** according to my gospel" **(2 Tim. 2:8).** No longer, be it noted, "according to the Scriptures," but "according to my gospel." " In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Rom. 2:16). **"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).** How clever of Paul to pull it over the eyes of unsuspecting and Biblically illiterate Gentiles who knew little if anything of the Jewish Scriptures or less the teachings within them regarding God and His Covenants.

**Answer for yourself: Whence had Paul his gospel, for which he claimed such authority that he would tolerate no interference with its decrees even by an angel from heaven?**

**I will again let Paul give his own answer: "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the** revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).

In a trance, that is; for, as we shall presently see, Paul never had any communication with Jesus himself either directly or indirectly; never even troubled to inform himself what Jesus taught by consulting those who might have known. After his conversion he waited 3 years before he went and spoke to the Apostles, and then after a short visit where he saw Peter and James, it would be another 14 years before he would see the Apostles again. Indeed, it is his boast that his knowledge is all derived by "inspiration." Here are his own words: "I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me" (Gal. 1:16-17). Again, "It pleased God . . . to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen" (Gal. 1:15-16). Notice if you will Paul's comment that the Son was "revealed in me " and not "to me."

**We cannot know, of course, what communications Paul had with God; but we can prove for certain that he had none with Jesus; for his conversion did not take place until after the death of Jesus. How long after may be surmised from a statement of Paul's to the Corinthians: "He (Jesus) was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep" (I Cor. 15:5-6).**

**All these are cited as witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, so they are witnesses of the resurrected Christ only. There is no mention of any one of them having known Jesus when still living. Now, whatever may be the value of their testimony in this connection, it is good evidence that Jesus had been dead at the time when there was a**

**sect in existence of "above five hundred brethren" whom Paul had persecuted (Gal. 1:13); I which again is good evidence that Paul did not join them until years after, when "some had fallen asleep."**

**These believers evidently were among those who believed in the resurrection of the body, a doctrine which, according to Josephus, was held by some of the Jewish sects. Some of these evidently believed that Jesus had risen. The disappearance of his body—thought by many to have been removed probably by his friends so as to protect it against desecration by his enemies—may have given rise to this belief. The memory of Jesus was held in reverence by many of the Essenes, and particularly by the "Nazarenes," as the sect was called when Paul joined it. "For we have found this man (Paul) . . . a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24: 5). But he was not known to them as "Christ," and they were not known as "Christians," until after Paul had become a convert and succeeded in convincing some of them of his theories, as is plainly set forth in Acts 6:25-26).**

**"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Paul: and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church [of the Nazarenes], and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:25-26). The "disciples" were those of Paul, of course.**

***It is as plainly established, therefore, as any fact in history can be established, that it was Paul who conceived the idea of the "Christ," and that this must have happened many years after the death of Jesus.***

**When, therefore, Paul claims to have received his apostleship directly from "Jesus Christ," it must be understood that he refers to the Christ of his hallucinations, and not to the real Jesus, whom he had never met. Indeed, it is highly doubtful whether Jesus and Paul were contemporaries.**

**I base this statement on the following considerations The stoning of Stephen must have taken place some years after the death of Jesus, for at that time already there was "a church which was at Jerusalem" (Acts 8:1). Paul, who was present at this stoning, was then "a youth," who looked after the garments of those who performed the stoning. Much later—that is, when he arrived at manhood's estate—Paul persecuted the Nazarenes, and must have been fairly advanced in age when he became a convert himself; for he says of himself (I Cor. 15: 8) that he "was born out of due time"—i.e. late in age. (Cf. also Philemon 5:9, "Paul the aged"). Now, the "youth" could scarcely have been described as such had he been older than say twenty years; and Paul could hardly have been less than forty years at the time of his conversion. This makes twenty years between the stoning of Stephen and the conversion of Paul. To this would have to be added the years which elapsed between the crucifixion of Jesus and the stoning of Stephen.**

**We will conclude this series of articles in the 3rd in this series.**

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# CONTRASTING THE GOSPEL OF PAUL VS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS #3

**Paul, if not the actual originator of the Christ-myth, was certainly the author of the Christian scheme of salvation, which in every essential is the antithesis of the teachings of Jesus. This is tough medicine for the Christian to see yet acknowledge. In hope and in courage let us continue our investigation in order that our faith be grounded in truth and not in errors inherited from the Roman Church.**

**It will be interesting here to contrast this Gospel of Paul with that of Jesus.**

**We possess an excellent summary of the Gospel of Jesus in the Parable of the Last Judgment, which I will quote in full:—**

**" And before him [the King] shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." " Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me." " Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? Or when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me". Notice that it was not unto Jesus, that is, but unto the "King" who is the speaker were these acts or "deeds" done.**

**"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." "Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" "Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matt. 25:32-45).**

**As may readily be seen, in all that is essential this parable which stesses "works" and not "faith" is the very antithesis of the philosophy of Paul. On the other hand, after reading the first two articles in this series, you should not fail to note the remarkable agreement of this parable, down to the smallest detail, with the narratives already quoted; not only as regards doctrine, but also in respect of style and diction. Without a doubt Jesus speaks of "deeds" done which leads to Eternal Life and "deeds" not done which leads to Eternal judgment. You have to admit that there is not one word from the mouth of Yeshua concerning if these addressed in this parable believed in or failed to believe in such things as his death, his Messiahship, his resurrection, his death as an atonement, sacraments,**

his divinity, etc.

**A study of Paul's life will reveal to you that he was a mystic, ever following after the supernatural, the mysterious, and the miraculous.** Paul's emphasis in "his" gospel concerns "cosmic salvation" and not an "earthly salvation" which merits Eternal Life when one dies. We find nothing of the kind in Jesus. All Yeshua's utterances relate to the mundane affairs of man in "this" life and little is said about "the world to come". Yeshua's emphasis, as well as his salvation message was always "earthly-centered"; where the rubber meets the road. Paul's salvation message was "other-worldly; mainly because he never knew the earthly Jesus and only has vision of the "cosmic Jesus". Yeshua's parables are all centered around some familiar, some "earthly" and homely event that is manifested in obedience and "works" as the fruit of one's faith. Yeshua spent over 95% of his time teaching his followers about how to live this life and in all of Paul's epistles he references only "two" of Yeshua's teachings. If we did not have the gospels, which were written after Paul and his writings, then we would not know the slightest things about Yeshua and what he believed and taught from Paul's writings. In other words, without Yeshua's teachings contained in the gospels we would not know the man or his message if we only had Paul's writings because for Paul the life and message of Yeshua was not important. Paul was more concerned with "his" gospel being received by the non-Jews than Yeshua's message which James reiterates and writes letters containing such a message which was to be taken and taught to the Gentile churches in Asia Minor following the Acts 15 council.

Oh by the way Paul was given such letters in Acts 16 and one would think that if Paul was obedient to James and the first Church Council then the bulk of his letters would yet be written would have contained many references to Yeshua' gospel. They do not! They don't because Paul was more concerned with making a reputation for himself by mass conversions of non-Jews which he figured would help with his acceptance by the Jerusalem establishment. The next time you read Paul's epistles notice how much space is devoted to his defense of his apostleship and understand he is defending himself to the Jerusalem church which knew that he "teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs" of the Jews. These "customs" happened to be manifestations of obedience to the Law and Commandments of God. So before you are misled by Christian teachings about Paul understand historically why Paul was rejected by Jerusalem. We have devoted a large amount of space on our second web site to the Paul problem and we hope you investigate it.

**Now let us get to the parable at hand. Though there are many lessons crowded into the parable of the good Samaritan, but the one which—by way of contrast with the teachings of Paul—is perhaps more obtrusively manifested than any other is the parable's implied scheme of "salvation." We must look deeply at the hidden message and not the obvious context. If you contrast Paul's views on salvation, as seen in Rom. 10:13 [For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved (faith only)],** we find that Yeshua and Paul had two completely different ideas as to what constituted salvation. Because of the Gentile influence this and many other such key words, such as "salvation," have been invested with theological meanings they were not intended originally to convey. But a typical Christian would never know this unless he investigated for himself what Judaism taught about salvation. Over the years, as my studies increased, I found that on the whole one of the main fallacies of the Gentile Church and its hermeneutics (interpretation of Scriptures) was its failure to apply a rationalist interpretation but rather an allegorical or "spiritualized" interpretation to the Jewish Scriptures. Words have been mistranslated or misinterpreted on purpose by Gentile theologians in order to make them fit in with either their existing pagan doctrinal theology or its evolutionary projections. Jesus certainly did not understand by "salvation" transportation to a kingdom in the clouds, as has already been explained in prior articles on "salvation" as well as the first two in this series; and this will become abundantly clear the more you study and contrast the different views on salvation as held by Jews and Gentiles.

According to Paul, anybody might save himself most easily by "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ

according to my gospel." I wish something so easy was true but we stand amazed when viewing the Jews who for two thousand of years now have refused to receive the "free gift" of salvation contingent only upon mental ascent to a dogma. In place of this easy salvation, the Jews continues to observe their Covenant and endeavor to observe its Covenant stipulations which is the only guarantee of acceptance and fellowship with God under such a Covenant; "the" Covenant given by God and not one of the Gentile's making!

According to Jesus, you cannot save yourself at all, except only by saving others. **Those who seek to save themselves, heedless as to what befalls their neighbors, are deceiving themselves. This is the meaning of that seeming paradox that "Whosoever will seek his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life** because of me **shall find it."** "Because of me" is understood by many scholars to mean "in consequence of my teachings, or by obeying these 'laws' which I preach unto you." **The Greek words unfortunately have been translated "for my sake"; a rendering which is agreeable to Pauline theology, but quite inconsistent with the character and teachings of Jesus, and not warranted by the context.**

**When Yeshua said "Whosoever will seek his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life** because of me **shall find it" is not mere sentiment, but a necessary truth.** It means that you cannot save yourself by fasting, incantations, baptisms, or mental assent to an accepted dogma about Jesus or what his death was later interpreted by Gentiles to mean. Your individual safety is bound up with that of your neighbors. Therefore to save yourself you must "save others"; you must see to it that there shall be none neglected or oppressed; that there are no pitfalls (or temptations), and that none are menaced. In short, you can assure your own salvation only by making sure that none need perish within the grasp of your influence.. This is true salvation. I was never more amazed in my life when studying the word for "salvation" over ten years ago, when after looking up every one of the seventeen different meanings for the word "save, saved, and salvation" in the Strong's Concordance that sixteen of the meanings for the word "salvation", as used in both the New and the Old Testaments, refereed to this life and not the next life after death. Overwhelming God was showing me that salvation is something for this life more than the next. But the sermons I heard since a child had told me otherwise. My Christian and Pauline doctrine had focused on "other-worldly" salvation almost to the exclusion of "salvation as manifestations of earthly deeds in response to correct doctrine. My Christian doctrine concerning Eternal Life was shown to be wrong the more I looked into things like this as my experience testified to my errors accepted as truth. Consequently my study confirmed my worst thoughts; my "deeds" were either lacking or in short supply. No longer could I feel confident of my salvation based upon what I believed that Paul wrote which was no more than "his gospel" and "his theology" which I was seeing diametrically opposed what Yeshua taught. I was a follower of Paul more than Yeshua. The last time I checked Paul is believed by no one to be Messiah, yet we believe Paul over Yeshua. This is not noticed by most, so Bet Emet endeavors to bring this to the readers attention in order that he can have a better grasp of his faith in view of hidden truths which bring correction to Christian error.

## BOY ARE YOU SURPRISED…CONSIDERING WHAT YOU WERE TAUGHT

**Another remarkable feature of the parable is the surprise of both the "blessed" and the "condemned"; for apparently neither of them expected things to turn out as they did. The wonder is, how this lesson could have remained all these centuries buried in the Gospels unnoticed and unheeded.**

**The "blessed" were quite unaware of having done anything meritorious. They probably were simple folk who attended to the daily affairs of life, feeding and clothing those dependent on them, and giving help where such was needed; not with any ulterior motive or expectation of reward, but just as part of the daily round of duties.**

**And as part of those duties they fed the hungry, clothed the naked, succoured the weak, visited the prisoners, and comforted those that mourned.** It was these deeds that constituted them "the blessed of the Father." **We are not told of any other merits of theirs, whether they ever attended the synagogue or whether they were Jews even.**

There is again no mention about "faith," which is so strong a point with Paul; no mention about Paul's or anybody else's gospel; about Adam's "fall" or a "promise" to Abraham; nor about "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ." Sorry to break you bubble but it simply is not there. The silence of such doctrines and their absence from the teachings concerning Eternal Life and the religious belief system of Jesus is deafening!

Just as the "blessed" were rewarded in virtue only for their good deeds towards their fellow-men, and without reference to their creed, dogmas, doctrines, sect, Pauline theology, or nationality, so the others were condemned solely because they did not attend to the needs of their neighbors. They failed to observe the Second Tablet of the Law; the same tablet Yeshua refers to consistently as "necessary" when asked concerning inheriting Eternal Life. **For all we know, the "blessed" may have been Gentiles who never attended a synagogue; and the "cursed" pious Jews--priests and Levites--who spent most of their time in prayer and in fasting (First Tablet of the Law).** Of such little account did Jesus consider these rites that—as on other occasions— he did not even mention them; but rather choose to give greater prominence to the importance of good works, so little thought of by Paul. This is the deception. It basically boils down to this: we must either believe Yeshua and "his gospel" or Paul and "his gospel". But be not deceived; these two gospels are in direct contradiction of each other. You might never have seen this but that does not change the fact that they oppose each other.

## WE MUST MAKE A DISTINCTION RIGHT NOW BETWEEN "GOOD" AND "GODLY"

Many Christians will say: "So what is so important about the Law and the Second Tablet of the Law... I live a good life." That may be true but let me remind you that transgression of the Law is sin and there is big difference in God's eyes between mankind doing "what he thinks is right" and "doing what God says." Often what man might feel is right or even what one has been taught by his church or pastor to do is contrary and against what the Commandments of God have commanded of all mankind to do in certain situations. These "traditions of men" have replaced what God Commanded as His absolutes. Certain conducts and behaviors, both positive which mankind is to "do" and negative which mankind is to "refrain" from are basically the Commandments of God. Such properly understood are how God has defined as Divine love in action in certain situations. Mankind when they observe them or refrain from such actions prohibited by them assure themselves of being Godly and being like God because God has defined in His Law 613 actions which He is and does and which He is not and which He does not. Mankind is required to be Holy like God is Holy and we approximate that to the degree we obey God and His Laws. We might think that a certain conduct is good and acceptable but when it replaces what God has commanded it is in God's eyes disobedience and sin. No greater example could be found than the tithe. God has commanded that gifts be given in certain amounts to certain areas in certain time intervals. When these funds called "tithes" are collected and given and used in other areas than what God has commanded it might appear to be beneficial to those areas to which receive them but the areas where God commanded they be distributed go lacking and such disobedience is sin as far as God is concerned by the "giver," not aware of such knowledge, is guilty of violating the tithing commandments yet he is giving to his church. When his pastor and his church use such funds in ways not sanctioned by God (as almost all if not all church budgets do) then even if these funds go to areas of "need" it is sin if they do not go to the areas where God has Commanded. The Laws of God command certain conduct be done and these are

God's way of defining "Absolute Love in action." Since being led to believe that we are no longer under the "Law" and that "Christ is the end of the Law" then mankind has been taught to come up with plan "B" and his rationalizations appear to himself and others as "good" but his failure to obey what God has commanded is not "Godly" and let me remind you that God has commanded mankind to be "Holy," Godly and not goodly." Such is the great deception which Pauline Christianity finds itself today.

# WHAT WAS THE RELIGION OF JESUS ANYWAY?

**Answer for yourself: But, I hear many ask, if this is as you say, what was the religion of Jesus? Was he an advocate of "grace" to the exclusion of "works" as Paul would have us believe? Was Yeshua a secularist?**

**I desire the reader to note the antithesis suggested by the two words and then to reflect why or whence that implied contrast. When he has found the answer, it will be the severest indictment of the Churches that have created this antithesis and a complete condemnation of their pseudo-religion.**

**If we turn to the dictionary we find the word " secular " thus defined: "pertaining to this present world, or to things not spiritual or holy; relating to things not immediately or primarily respecting the soul, but the body; worldly; temporal."**

**It is quite obvious that theology is responsible for this definition. "Religion" and the "affairs of life"; "holiness" and "temporal duties"; "body" and "soul"; "piety" and "duty": these have not only been divorced, but made antagonistic; with the result that a religion and a piety have been evolved that are the consummation of selfishness.**

**To prove this we need only contemplate a piety as free from "worldliness" as conditions of life permit and the result will be, not a saint but an ascetic; a person who has renounced this world with all its duties, who has debased even his own body, in the hope of thus being able to save his own soul. As if such a pitiful human wreck could have any soul left worth the saving! Yet the irony of the whole thing is that the above scenario describes perfectly the Catholic Monks of the Dark Ages who were the poster children of the Catholic Church and their Gentile theology during the Dark Ages. This is typical of Christianity and not of Judaism; the religion of Yeshua the Jew.**

**I am aware that no sane person is likely to carry his fervor so far as the ascetic I am contemplating. Yet the latter would but carry to its logical conclusion the doctrine which denounces this world and its duties as "temporal" or "secular" in opposition to what the Churches consider as "spiritual" or "religious". The result is not "saintliness," but selfishness run mad.**

**There is a counterpart to such a "saint." It is the self-indulgent, pleasure-seeking, sensuous egotist who cares as little about what becomes of the rest of mankind in this world as the ascetic cares about their fate in the next. They are the two extremes of a false conception of existence, actuated by like motives. The ascetic sacrifices the pleasures of this world as a price for future and eternal bliss; and the "worldling" who does not believe in the future life is trying to get what "pleasures" he can out of this. Each of them is trying to get the most for himself; they differ only in taking opposite chances. That there are duties in this present world which are sacred because pertaining to this present life, does not occur to either; and in consequence both are classed in the parable among " the cursed."**

**If the parable teaches anything at all, it is this, that of all the iniquities and abominations none is greater than the doctrine which would divorce the duties of this life and of this world from religion, or would stigmatize such duties as "secular," "temporal " or "worldly," in opposition to "holy," "spiritual," or "religious." The classification is an erroneous one, based as it is on false conceptions of life, duty, and religion. Not that which is secular or temporal is opposed to religion, but that which is sordid, selfish, and iniquitous. This is the criterion that is decisive in the Parable of the Last**

**Judgment. The whole religion of Jesus consists in "temporal" or "secular" duties, and of course could consist in nothing else. The aphorism of "serving God rather than man" is but an easy way of trying to escape one's duties.**

**You cannot serve God save by serving God's children; this is the teaching of Jesus. Your praise is blasphemy; your gifts, if given as bribes for future rewards, sacrilege; and your fasts hypocrisy. The essence of religion is this: "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these, you have done it unto me."**

**To live a life of love, of justice, of mercy, of forbearing and forgiving, helping the weak, succouring the needy, seeing in each fellow-creature a child of the "Father which is in heaven," sanctifying that Fatherhood by recognizing your brotherhood, is not worldliness, but righteousness; and to neglect these duties and to devote all your time and thought to praying to God for your own welfare is not "spiritual" or "holy," but sordid and selfish. Such a one is surely "so Heavenly minded that he is no earthly good."**

**The Parable of the Last Judgment leaves no room for doubt as to what constituted righteousness in the eyes of Jesus. The Christian Church who has traded "works" for "faith" should reexamine the parable and prepare to repent of following a "false gospel".**

**Long habit of thought and association of ideas have invested the words "religion," "spiritual," and "pious" with a theological flavor that assigns to them meanings that are opposite to "secular," "temporal," or "worldly." But, as I have already pointed out, the life of a praying and ascetic may be as sordid and selfish as that of the sensuous egotist; whilst a person who never goes to church or chapel may—notwithstanding—be unselfish, religious, and "spiritual" in the strict sense approved by the head of the Church and Christianity.**

**Let me visualize my meaning. Let us take one of each group of the "saints" and " sinners" of the Parable of the Last Judgment, and in imagination observe each in the performance of those characteristic acts which resulted in such unexpected awards. I will choose the priest and the Samaritan of that other parable for the purpose. It is not necessary to assume that the priest was cruel or callous. Maybe he was preoccupied with what he considered his duty to God…to head up a ministry. Maybe he was hastening to the synagogue, where a congregation was awaiting him to conduct divine service, and in mind was rehearsing the prayer he was going to offer. Whatever the reasons, "he passed by on the other side."**

**Then comes the Samaritan, bent on "worldly" business, carrying some oil to market, thinking how to dispose of it and what to buy with the proceeds, so as best to meet the needs of his household. He also sees the poor man, stops, succors him, pours oil into his wounds, ties them up, then raises the patient's head with his left arm, and with his right hand offers him to drink. I want your mind to catch him in this attitude, bent over the sufferer, compassion in his eyes, but no thought of temple, psalms, or God, his whole and sole concern for the moment being how to help a stricken-down fellow-being.**

**And now behold the priest, decked out in his canonicals, in front of the draped altar, with hands raised and eyes upturned, chanting the praises of God; not hypocritically, but with all the fervor and devotion of a man who is convinced that on the due performance of these rites depends the salvation of—his own soul. He never missed a church service and always set on the front row.**

**Compare now priest and Samaritan, the former concerned about his own soul, the latter about his strickendown neighbor, and then tell me which of the two is the "religious" and which the "secular" act? Compare the loud chantings of the priest and congregation with the silent thanksgiving that beams from the grateful eyes of the sufferer. What prayer, what hymn of praise could tongue compose or lips recite to equal it ?**

**Answer for yourself: Would you, after these reflections, still call the service of the priest "divine" and that of the Samaritan "secular" or "worldly" ?**

**I found the following comments by I. Signer most insightful and I hope you do as well. "I grant that, to the eye, the priest's is the prettier picture. The priest's religion is also much the easier to follow. But do not tell me that it is the "warmer," or that it can satisfy that secret yearning of a truly devout soul which seeks happiness in the consciousness of having done its duty. Do not misunderstand me. I am not speaking against church, pastor, or priest. Far from it. Both have a mission, and a sacred one. It is their errors I am trying to expose; errors inherited from Gentile Christianity and their fraudulent document which contains them…the New Testament. It is good for people to congregate and to join in prayer, in dealings of thought and of sentiment. Such acts stimulate religion, but are not religious in themselves. They may be aids to religion, but cannot be substitutes for it. Go to church by all means. But if you should pray or sing a hymn to God that shall be acceptable and the acceptance of which you shall feel in your heart, I challenge you to take home with you that hungry mother with the half-starved infant in her arms standing at the street corner in the hope of alms that you passed up on your way to church. Feed the child and then watch the mother's eyes. Hymn after hymn and prayer after prayer will ascend, and no doubt the divine spirit in your own heart will receive and respond to songs and prayer, but although never a sound is uttered in such good "works" as the fruit of your faith, there will come the promised response to you: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me'" (I. Singer, The Rival Philosophies of Jesus and of Paul, p. 89-90).**

**"But our duty does not end with feeding mother and child and dismissing them with a present, however generous. You cannot buy your salvation in this easy fashion. You will have to find out the cause of that woman's distress, and if it be due to some social wrong or some social institution, then the fault is at your own door. No amount of praying can relieve you of the duty to help to remove the iniquity through which that woman has been reduced to that pitiable plight. The rabbis teach us that such confrontation with religious error is the sanctification of the Name of God and failure to confront one who teaches contrary to the only true religion God gave mankind profanes the Name of God. Nor can you be safe yourself while that pitfall is allowed to remain" (I. Singer, The Rival Philosophies of Jesus and of Paul, p. 90-91).**

**There is an unmistakable correspondence between the character of Paul and his teachings, as there is between the character and teachings of Jesus. But there is no conformity whatever, nor any point of contact, between the two philosophies, "gospels," or the characters of their respective authors.**

***Whether we compare their lives, doctrines, or trains of thought, Paul is in every respect the antithesis of Jesus. Paul was austere, narrow-minded, bigoted, doctrinaire, superstitious, and intolerant. Jesus was in every respect the opposite.***

## A CAPSULATED LOOK AT PAUL...& HIS CONTRADISTINCTION AS COMPARED TO JESUS

- **Paul cursed those who dared differ from him (Gal. 1:8); Jesus enjoined "love your enemies"—and practiced it, too.**
- **" He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" was the formula of Jesus; "He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ" was the formula of Paul.**
- **Paul believed in the efficacy of oaths, and thought it necessary even for God so to confirm his promises (Heb. 6:17); Jesus said, "Swear not at all . . . but let your communications be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Luke 6:35).**
- **Paul's God was jealous and vindictive (Heb. 4:12), from whose wrath he endeavored to save the elect. Jesus knew no such vindictive deity. His God was a loving Father, who sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust, and who "is kind even to the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:35).**
- **Hence Paul speaks of "saints" or the "elect"; Jesus never uses either of these terms, but**

speaks of the "righteous" and the "unrighteous," and of both as "the children of the Father."

- Paul's sole concern was for his saints. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance.
- Paul's reasoning is always specious, superficial, and plausible. Jesus appealed to reason and to the facts of nature. "As it is written . . ." said Paul. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you" was the form of address used by Jesus.
- Paul argued much against the "law," as being no longer of any account. But Jesus, when asked "What must I do to inherit life?" answered, "Obey the law."
- Paul is as insistent that "works without faith " are of no avail as Jesus is emphatic that piety of any kind without good deeds in the service of others is useless.
- Paul had practically abandoned all hope in a possible uplifting of mankind. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). Jesus, on the other hand, believed in the potential goodness of man: "Ye are the salt of the earth"; "Ye are the light of the world." "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
- Paul saw no hope for any regeneration. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" (Rom. 3:20); and the only salvation of mankind he could see was in his gospel of the atonement of Christ. He did not think it was in man to save himself at all, save through being "ransomed." The very idea of ascribing to Jesus such a senseless and mischievous doctrine as that one man's disobedience should be visited on all mankind, or that by merely believing in the goodness of someone else people should be able to atone for their own, misdeeds, is too ludicrous for serious discussion.
- According to Jesus there can be no such atonement as is so confidently proclaimed by Paul. You are warned off the altar even, and advised to "agree with shine adversary quickly . . . lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge.... Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing" (Matt. 5:25-26).

**Thus we might go on showing that every doctrine or dogma of Paul was a negation of something which Jesus enjoined on mankind as necessary for their regeneration.**

***Indeed, if it were not for the misuse of terms, Paul might be described as the veritable "Anti-Christ," in the sense of being an adversary of the only true religion God gave mankind; the religion of Yeshua….Biblical Judaism whereby the non-Jew by faith and works is grafted into Israel and does not find his standing with God apart from the Israel of God.***

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# COMPARISON OF HEBRAIC AND CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES

**We have in the past articles contrasted the core difference between the Gospel of Jesus/Yeshua and the Gospel of Paul. The following is a comparison of theological interpretations of the Bible by both Judaism and Gentile Christianity. One is in error of many of the points concerning the Jewish Scriptures. With your current understanding and knowledge of the Word of God and the Jewish Scriptures I invite you to read and compare the respective stances of both camps against the revealed word and will of God in the Bible Jesus used...the Old Testament. Next I invite you to investigate it out for yourself and see which is correct.**

**Having now read the prior three articles contrasting the contrasting and conflicting "gospels" of Paul and Yeshua concerning how to inherit Eternal Life, it is overwhelming when you consider how Gentile "dogma" has replaced the beliefs and teachings of Judaism..the religion of Yeshua. Below is what Yeshua believed as part of 2nd Temple Judaism and what Rome replaced it with following the destruction of the Temple and the creation of the New Testament over the following centuries. One is a false "gospel" and the other is the "true gospel" and the religious belief system of Yeshua. The only question for you should be...who are you to follow...Yeshua or Rome?**

## NATURE OF GOD:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament- Monotheism, oneness of God as opposed to Trinity.**

**Gentile Christianity-Dualism or Trinitarianism, the doctrine of the Trinity had not yet been accepted by the Church in the 3rd Century (cf. Encyc. Jud., Vol 10, p. 16.)**

## NATURE OF MAN:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Man is born good. Until the age of accountability (13 male, 12 female) one's sins are the responsibility of one's parents. From the age of accountability one is considered a responsible adult who can choose not to sin.**

**Gentile Christianity-Man is born evil, a "victim" of original sin; man therefore has no choice but to sin.**

## FORGIVENESS OF SIN:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-There is no provision for willful sin except repentance and restitution. Man is cut off from God. The Jewish view challenges the doctrine of "eternal security" or "once saved always saved" and the resultant imbalance of "grace and not law".**

**Gentile Christianity-Man may sin and still be pardoned by God in the next life no matter how he lives if he only "believes" in Jesus. This results in the unbiblical doctrines concerning "once saved always saved" & "eternal**

**security of the believer". Purgatory is the "fire-escape".**

## SATAN:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-The adversary is a created being who is in complete subjection to the sovereignty and will of God.**

**Gentile Christianity-Dualism; there are two equal forces of good and evil in the universe and they are constantly fighting it out (derivation of Persian captivity).**

## MARRIAGE AND SEX:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Sex is good, mandated by God as the first positive commandment in the Bible. (The marriage bed is undefiled.)**

**Gentile Christianity-Sex is inherently sinful (in sin was I conceived). The sex act is always sin unless for the purposes of procreation. In marriage sex is no longer a "mortal" sin but only a "venial" sin. Christianity maintains that absence from sex is meritorious.**

## ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY & ASSEMBLY:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-The synagogue is the core of the religious and secular life of the community. It is not an ecclesiastical structure, and the leaders are paid no salary. It is not hierarchical but rather emphasizes the priesthood of all members of the community.**

**Gentile Christianity-The church is a building or something one does on Sunday, a religious service instead of a community. It does not have the same organizational structure and leadership levels as ancient Judaism & the early Church (Nasi, Chazan, etc.) It is ecclesiastical and hierarchical.**

## FREQUENCY OF ASSEMBLIES:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Met once a week on the Sabbath except for Festivals (emphasis is building families).**

**Gentile Christianity-Usually twice-three times a week unless special events then can meet nightly (emphasis is building a congregation).**

## THE MISSION OF THE SYNAGOGUE VS CHURCH:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-The strongest emphasis is placed on teaching and study of Torah (discipleship) to build spiritual maturity in the person.**

**Gentile Christianity-Preaching has replaced teaching; focus on evangelizing the already saved Sunday after Sunday instead of instructing & teaching them for growth & spiritual maturity through the release of their gifts and service.**

## SALVATION:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Righteous non-members of the assembly will also have a share in the world to come and be saved ("righteous Gentiles"-the righteous of all nations-Noahide Laws) (Matt. 25:1, Rom 2:12-15).**

**Gentile Christianity-If one does not "believe in Jesus" & "go to church" he will go to hell.**

## SPIRITUALITY:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-The sanctification of all of life to God; down to earth and focus on living in the kingdom of God now; not just other-worldly (after death).**

**Gentile Christianity-Departmentalizes life in sections: secular and spiritual.**

## GIVING:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-1/3 of your gifts go to the 1) Teachers, choir, maintenance, 2) 1/3 to the benevolence (poor/almsgiving), 3) 1/3 goes to yourself to build yourself up in God (festivals)**

**Gentile Christianity- Give to churches and ministries; no oversight of the direction of the funds. Does not follow the Biblical tithe.**

## DAY OF REST:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Saturday as commanded in the Ten Commandments.**

**Gentile Christianity-Sunday; as based on later traditions-early Church councils of the 4th century. (loss of Jewish roots)**

## RELATIONSHIP TO ISRAEL IN THE BIBLE:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-The world is divided into 2 camps: Jews & Gentiles, chosen and not chosen. One is either born a member of the chosen people or become a member as a proselyte.**

**Gentile Christianity-Not a part of Israel, but is a Gentile replacement of the chosen of God. The Jews have been rejected and replaced as God's chosen people by the Gentile church (replacement theology). The church is the "new Israel". Israel is spiritualized and when you read "Israel" in Scripture you are to think of the church, not of physical Israel (at least when blessings are concerned and not the curses; the curses are left for "physical Israel"). The world is divided into 3 camps: Jews, Gentile Christians, and Gentile pagans. Christians have lost their Jewish roots and identity.**

## NATURE OF THIS LIFE:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Life is seen as a preparation for the world to come. Trials & temptations are from God's hand and are blessings in disguise because they refine our character (James 1:2).**

**Gentile Christianity-Prosperity; One can write your own ticket by speaking to God, Satan, or the situation using scriptural promises as a formula. Trials & tribulations are a curse, not from God but from Satan, and there is no reason we should experience them if we are uttering positive confessions.**

## PROPHECY:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-One cannot know the time of the coming of the LORD nor should one speculate about the future; one should keep his garments white by continual repentance because His coming will be sudden and unexpected.**

**Gentile Christianity-The LORD's coming is imminent; not to be unexpected for the believer since he will be able to interpret the "signs" of the LORD'S coming. Many offer exact predictions.**

## FAITH:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Expressed as a response to a belief system through obedience and good deeds (Jas. 2:14-26).**

**Gentile Christianity-Faith in God, elevating belief above tangible action and obedience. Agreement to an accepted set of doctrine brings acceptance.**

## RESPONSE TOWARD EVIL:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Permitted self-defense, legitimacy of defending oneself.**

**Gentile Christianity-Passive resistance, pacifism.**

## THE BIBLE:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Hebraic background of the whole Bible (even the New Testament). Proper understanding only possible when viewing the Bible in its original history, culture, and language.**

**Gentile Christianity-Hellenization of Scripture (viewing the Bible through the eyes of Greek culture and language instead of Hebrew).**

## THE LAW (TORAH-OLD TESTAMENT)

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-All men and under the laws of God; to the Jew he was given the Noahide Laws & Mosaic Law as a foundation; to the Gentile he was given the Laws of Noah only. It is the obedience to the laws of God that brings blessing, social order, and blessings from God.**

**Gentile Christianity-The Law is evil and we are delivered from the commandments of God by faith in Jesus. The Law has passed away and we are under grace.**

## WEALTH:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-There is no merit in poverty.**

**Gentile Christianity-There is merit in poverty.**

## BAPTISM:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Practiced continued immersions throughout life to enter into a heightened Presence of God.**

**Gentile Christianity-Baptized only once into Messiah.**

## THE LORD'S SUPPER:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Every week partook of 3 meals: Friday evening to begin Sabbath, followed by two Sabbath meals.**

**Gentile Christianity-Name given to Christian Communion consisting of a cracker and a cup of grape juice.**

## HOLY DAYS:

**Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament-Celebrates the Festivals of the Lord according to Leviticus 23.**

**Gentile Christianity-Celebrates the Gregorian Holidays which are all derived from Paganism.**

# CONCLUSION

**If the above is not an "eye-opener" I don't know what is. What amazes me is the New Testament admonition in Philippians where it says:**

***Phil 2:5 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (KJV)***

**You may not have noticed it but each category labeled "Biblical Judaism And The Old Testament" reflects what Jesus the Jew believed according to Second Temple Judaism in the First Century. Contrary to it is the below description of what Gentile Christianity today teaches in place of what Jesus believed. What is ludicrous to the "thinking believer" is that one who calls himself a "believer in Jesus" and a "follower of Jesus" holds completely different religious beliefs from which Jesus held sacred. The above list is not exhaustive to be certain but hopefully an "eye-opener" to the fact that many who hold themselves to be "followers of Jesus" are anything but that and such a notion is hypocrisy in the highest level. Having seen the above "opposites" one should wonder how "the" faith once given to the saints was altered and begin to investigate how we have come as Gentiles today to follow "another Gospel" when all along falsely instructed that we are not! The sad fact of the matter is that Gentile Christianity today renders one an "Anti-Jesus" or an "Anti-Christ." [THINK]**

***Matt 24:24 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (KJV)***

***Mark 13:22 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. (KJV)***

**Answer for yourself: Now upon examination of this list, let me ask you "What does the Bible that Jesus used have to say on these issues?"**

**Answer for yourself: Which do you think is more correct...the Bible that Jesus used or what you now read in the Roman New Testament?**

**Answer for yourself: Which are you following and which did Jesus follow?**

**Answer for yourself: Which of the above comparisons of religious beliefs did Jesus hold and believe in?**

**Answer for yourself: Do we want the mind of Christ and does this mean accepting the Jewish understanding over the anti-Semitic Roman doctrines we have inherited?**

**Answer for yourself: Would you ever before God contemplate a change or at least begin serious study of these matters for yourself?**

**Answer for yourself: What would Jesus want you to believe?**

**Answer for yourself: What did Jesus believe and what will you now believe when your study convinces you otherwise than the way you have been taught in the Gentile Church?**

**Answer for yourself: What is God's Religious Belief System and should you not want to make it yours?**

***A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, and archeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change.***

**Lastly, if you truly love HaShem (God), and Yeshua, in whose name the message of HaShem came to you, although dressed in pagan garb and Pauline replacement religion, then understand that before you die you best look like Israel. You best worship like Israel, you best love the Torah as does the Israel of God. I would not want to die as a Gentile Christian and accepting its false religious belief system and meet your maker believing and living a lie. Too much of what you have been taught by Gentile and Pauline Christianity is direct disobedience to the Commandments of God. Such false teachings robs us of blessing in the world to come and joy we can share with our Maker now. Yes, you learned of God most likely in the church via the name of Jesus. But Yeshua was a Jew, and salvation is of the Jews and not the Christian Church. Best we learn that now while there is time to repent and return to the faith ONCE given to the saints. Shalom…and Baruch HaShem**

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# PAUL AND HIS HERETICAL VIEW OF AUTHORITY...WAS HE A SEXIST?

**So often we read the New Testament and fail to "think." At least that was what I did because I grew up being told that "everything" in the New Testament was from God. Well that was long ago and since then I and others who want to know the truth from antisemitic Gentile church tradition spend countless hours and years in in-depth study to recover truth long lost in hopes of drawing closer to God through repentance and obedience to His truth and not the religious doctrines which sadly today has replaced it. One area which little truth can be found is in Paul's views of authority as expressed in the New Testament as we shall now see.**

**Paul declared in Romans 13 that all people must submit to their rulers because "the authorities that exist have been established by God" and to rebel against authority is "to rebel against what God has instituted" (13:1-2 also Titus 3:1).**

***Rom 13:1-2 1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. (KJV)***

**We find the same though expressed in Titus 3:**

***1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, (KJV)***

**This bootlicking posture was reassuring and pleasing to the Romans to be sure. Paul knew that back in Judea there were Jews rebelling all the time against a power they neither believed came from God, nor had a right to be in their country. In fact the Roman Empire was faced with periodic revolts of conquered nations almost throughout its history.**

**With his proclamation Paul accomplished three objectives:**

- **He proved, first of all, his loyalty to Rome and by extension, that of his followers.**
- **Secondly, he showed that his religion, unlike Judaism, posed no challenge to the Roman authorities.**
- **Thirdly, be demonstrated to the Romans the wide gulf between his faith and the religion from which it had sprung.**

**Paul's doctrine of obedience to rulers had one more peripheral and long-lasting effect. It kept Christians in thrall to oppressive regimes for centuries as their church leaders preached meekness and resignation to those in power who were presumably appointed by God. Alan Davies wrote, "That notion was the curse of German Christianity. It is plainly impossible to regard the Hitlers of the world as divine appointees. Nor is it possible to regard order as intrinsically more meritorious than justice....Order and justice**

**exist in tension, and anarchy is no worse than the cannibalistic order of the totalitarian state. Auschwitz, at least, had clarified that truth" (Alan Davies, Anti-Semitism and the Christian Mind p. 185).**

**Ever since the time of the Judges, Jews have been regularly in the forefront of rebellion against rulers they considered tyrannical. The prophetic tradition established a precedent of opposition to oppressive rulers.**

# THE SEXISM OF PAUL

**Paul's view of the sacred rights of government authorities was reflected in the ideas of his disciples about the superior role of men. The authors of Colossians, Ephesians, Titus, and 1 Peter considered the relation of wives to their husbands as comparable to the position of subjects to their rulers [just as a side note there is some question about whether Paul wrote Colossians and 2 Thessalonians. Scholars are sharply divided on this issue]. Just as Paul exhorted everyone to surrender to higher civil powers, the writer of Ephesians, who was imbued with Paul's philosophy, urged women to submit to their husbands' dominance, as follows in 5:23:**

***Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is head of the church.***

**A similar admonition to women is found in Col 3:18.**

***Col 3:18 18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. (KJV)***

**1 Cor. 11:7-10 and Titus 2:5 also carry the same message of women's inferiority to men and wives' subjection to husbands. It is in 1 Peter 3:6 that the Hebrew Bible is called on to supply both proof and tradition for women's submissive role. The author of the epistle of I Peter was not Paul but had been influenced by Pauline philosophy. I find this personally ludicrous if you have studied for yourself the severe split between Peter and Paul which the Gentile Church has tried to hide for over 1900 years at present. The author of I Peter claimed that Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her lord or master (depending on the New Testament translation). The author of I Peter's choice was a poor example of wifely subservience. It would be more fitting to cite Abraham as a model of husbandly submission to the will of his wife. When Sarah could not conceive a child, she told Abraham to take her servant, Hagar, as a concubine. It was her idea and he did her bidding. After Isaac's birth Sarah decided to send the bondswoman and her son away. Although Abraham did not want to do this, he was told by God to "hearken to her voice"--in other words, obey her. This is still the meaning of that Biblical expression in modem Hebrew. In fact, this is the only case in the Tanakh in which a spouse was ordered to obey the partner--and it was the husband who was commanded by God to obey his wife. The Hebrew word, lord, by which Sarah referred to her husband once, did not necessarily convey the meaning of master just as it does not today among Hebrew speakers.**

**"Adoni," my lord or sir can be, and is, used today when addressing the common person let alone a dignitary. Interestingly, in modern Hebrew, the word for husband is "baal" which has as one of its meanings, master. Obedience to a tyrant or to a husband was not part of the Hebrew Scriptural injunctions. This was yet just another departure in a long line of departures from the Law and Jewish tradition by Paul. Yet we are supposed to believe that he was a "Pharisee of Pharisees."**

# PAUL ON MARRIAGE...AGAIN HE GOES AGAINST THE TORAH

**One more giant step away from Biblical Faith and Biblical Judaism, which Paul took is represented by his attitude toward marriage. Jewish tradition has followed the view expressed in Gen. 2:18, *"It is not good that a man should be alone."* The rabbis have concluded that marriage is the normal and desirable state for**

**adults and that celibacy is contrary to nature.**

**In Jewish teaching, marriage is the ideal human state and is considered a basic social institution established by God at the time of creation. In The Bible The purposes of marriage in the Bible are companionship and procreation: *"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him... Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh"* (Gen. 2:18, 24); and *"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth..."* (Gen. 1:28). The biblical conception of marriage is essentially monogamous (Gen. 2:24), and although in biblical times polygamy was common among the upper classes (Judg. 8:30; II Sam. 5:13; I Kings 11:1–8), the many references to marriage in the Wisdom literature seem to take it for granted that a man had only one wife (Ps. 128; Prov. 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10–31 Ecclus. 25:1; 26). Marriage is the means to true companionship: *"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good"* (Prov. 18:22; cf. 12:4; 14:1; 19:14; 31:10–31); "live joyfully with thy wife whom thou lovest" (Eccles. 9:9).**

**In contrast, rabbinic teaching sees celibacy as unnatural. It is not he who marries who sins; the sinner is the unmarried man who "spends all his days in sinful thoughts" (Kid. 29b). Marriage is not only for companionship and procreation; it also fulfills one as a person: "He who has no wife is not a proper man" (Yev. 63a); he lives "without joy, blessing, goodness... Torah, protection... and peace" (Yev. 62b); he may not officiate as high priest on the Day of Atonement (Yoma 1:1), and probably not as sheli'ah zibbur on the High Holy Days (Isserles to Sh. Ar., OH 581:1, based on Yoma 1:1 and Yev. 37b). Sexual desire is not evil or shameful. When regulated and controlled in marriage, it serves beneficial ends: "Were it not for the yezer ha-ra ("evil inclination" here sexual urge), no man would build a house, marry a wife, or beget children" (Gen. R. 9:7). He who, by denying his legitimate instincts, fails to produce children "is as if he shed blood, diminished the Image of God, and made the Shekhinah depart from Israel" (Sh. Ar., EH 1:1, based on Yev. 63b–64a), and he will have to account for his actions in the world to come (Shab. 31a). A practical order of procedure, derived from Deuteronomy (20:5–7) states; "First build a house, then plant a vineyard, and after that marry" (Sot. 44a). As far as a girl is concerned, if her father does not find her a husband while she is young (from the age of 12), she may become unchaste and he will have transgressed the commandment in Leviticus 19:29: "Profane not thy daughter to make her a harlot" (Sanh. 76a). The positive attitude of the rabbis to marriage was maintained in post-talmudic literature and Jewish practice. Asceticism and celibacy continued to be rare.**

**Not only is Paul's views toward women but the deliberate renunciation of marriage as taught by Paul is all but completely alien to Judaism. Scarcely any references to celibates are to be found in the Bible or in the Talmud, and no medieval rabbi is known to have lived as a celibate (see L. Loew, Gesammelte Schriften, 2 (1890), 112; 3 (1893), 29ff.). The demands of celibacy were included neither among the acts of self-denial imposed upon the Nazirite (Num. 6:1–21), nor among the special restrictions incumbent upon the priesthood (Lev. 21:1–15). Celibacy among Jews was a strictly sectarian practice; Josephus ascribes it to some of the Essenes (Wars 2:120–21).**

**By contrast, Paul, supposedly a "Pharisee of Pharisees" wrote in 1 Cor. 7:1, *"It is good for a man not to many."* The Essenes, like Paul, in general rejected worldly pleasures, including marriage, and practiced continence (Jos., Wars, 2:120). Again for the "thinking believer" we have a clue to Paul and his connection with the apostate Essenes and their corrupt theology, but that is a study for another day. God has a different view on the matter than Paul; but that is not news to you if you have studied the "real Paul." Paul wrote this in the context that the end of the age was at hand. The Church, however, continued the idea of the virtues of celibacy by demanding it of its clergymen and women. It took fifteen centuries to alter this arrangement for the Protestant clergy. One only need study the history of the Gentile Roman Catholic church to find the incessant accounts of homosexuality among the monks and the thousands of aborted fetuses and dead babies buried under the churches from monks and nuns who tried but failed to live a life of celibacy. God never intended it to be this way; but as you are seeing man would rather create his own God and His own religion than follow the one given to him by YHWH. One only need look at the newspapers today to see the sickness of man-made**

**religion as the pedophilia of the Roman Catholic Church and their leaders is being exposed for what it really is. Jesus said..."you know them by their fruits." One question: "When was the last time you saw a Rabbi on the front page of your paper who molested children?" It would seem that have a fear of God that we have failed to learn in the Christian Church. Maybe, just maybe, they know something we don't! It is time to listen to Jesus the Jew and other Jews like him shed their "light" upon us...the Gentile Nations of the world and realize what this New Testament really is: a antisemitic Gentile document that carries the names of Jesus' apostles in order to "sell it" to the Gentile world. Yep; we bought it...hook line and sinker.**

**Paul went on to explain that marriage was preferable to immorality. But this was, in Paul's theology, a concession to weakness, not a command. This is different from Judaism which views sex as satisfying, not sinful; a gift of Nature rather than a sign of imperfection. So you have a choice to make; hopefully you can begin to open your eyes to see the truth behind doctrines that go totally against Biblical revelation and faith regardless of whose name it carries in the New Testament. It is time to study the Jewish Jesus and the faith of this man and the "mind of Christ" to see just what was in it and what he believed along with what his true Jewish followers believed and taught to the Gentile world before Rome and Constantine would destroy it all and give us the replacement religion we have today. Shalom.**

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# PAUL AND HIS VIEWS TOWARD "JEWISH CHRISTIANS"...WHAT WOULD JESUS THINK OF THIS?

**If you are the typical Christian you have been taught that the term "Judaizer" is a bad term. In fact you most likely have been taught by the Gentile Christian Church that such person termed a "Judaizer" is against God.**

- **Answer for yourself: But what is the real truth of the matter?**
- **Answer for yourself: Could this interpretation of these "Judaizers" been the fruit of Gentile antisemitism as they crafted the New Testament and it's perversion of truth?**
- **Answer for yourself: Was the Gentile Church responsible for the writing of the most anti-Law part of the Bible, Galatians chapter 3, after 180 A.D. in Paul's name?**
- **Answer for yourself: Did the antisemitic Gentile Fathers of the Church help "Paul along" and elaborate on his ideas more fully in Galatians 3 and the book of Hebrews to ensure that non-Jews no longer turn to the faith of Jesus and live as "semi-proselytes" within Judaism?**

**Let us look into the matter.**

## THE EPISTLES TELL A DIFFERENT STORY FROM GENTILE CHURCH TRADITION...IF YOU ARE KEEN OF HEARING

**Besides propounding and spreading doctrines of this new religion by way of the epistles, Paul and other apostles also used the vehicle of these religious epistles to fight competition both from within their ranks and outside of their new faith. Many passages in the New Testament allude to a division in the Church: both between Paul and with James, Peter and the Jerusalem church as well as within the Pauline movement itself which seems to reflect a conflict between Paul and his rivals. I first learned of this severe schism between Paul and the Jerusalem church when in Seminary but the professor glossed over it in 30 seconds or less. I wrote it down to investigate at a later time and in doing so found a wealth of evidence that I had never encountered that told a different picture than what I was accustomed to hearing as a typical Christian. It was through study of Baur and the Tubigen school of Germany that I came to see these truths for myself as the truth about Paul came to the surface. Verses in several chapters in First Corinthians (1, 2, 4, 6, 10) and Philippians 1:15-18 speak of quarrels among contesting factions but few who read these passages catch the hidden ideas that two different factions are present and opposing each other historically and that the group opposing Paul emanate from the Jerusalem church. Here are just a few.**

- **1 Cor 1:2 2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: (KJV)**

- **1 Cor 1:10 10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**
- **1 Cor 1:11 11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 2:12-16 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we [as opposed to you] have the mind of Christ. (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 4:3 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 4:14 14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 4:16 16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me [these other believers are not; the implication is that they follow the Jerusalem Church and James]. (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 4:21 21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness? (KJV)**
- **1 Cor 10:30 30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? (KJV) [ the reason is that what Paul was teaching at table fellowship that it is permissible to eat meat sacrificed to idols if a weaker brother is not present to witness it is considered idolatry in the Laws of Noah...Acts 15!]**
- **Phil 1:15-18 15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. 18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. (KJV)**

**Answer for yourself: What should we have seen from the above accounts? Namely that the contention we see in the above passages is between Paul and "another sect of believers" in Christ that oppose Pauline theology in their day. Ironically the identity of these that opposed Paul are the "Judaizers" of whom Paul speaks evilly about in his epistles. They are the true followers of Jesus and James and the Jerusalem Church.**

# ENTER THE JUDAIZERS...PAUL'S ENEMY: THERE ARE 3 TYPES

**More numerous in the epistles are references to the ideological differences with "those who would lead astray;" and these pro-Pauline accounts are not just in epistles believed to be of Pauline authorship. In this we seen the later influence of Paul among the Gentile church following the demise of the Temple and the dispersion of the Jews. These opponents of Paul were people who were perceived by Paul and other Paulinists as serious and dangerous adversaries and they came to be known as "Judaizers" (Encyclopedia Judaica, 1971, Vol. 10, p. 398; New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1967, Vol. 8, p. 13). The word is not found in the New Testament. The term is used loosely to identify persons who practiced some Jewish customs and observed some Jewish laws and it was these people that Paul opposed which are referenced in the passages in I Cor. and Philippians above.**

**This is a complex subject. Writers have distinguished three groups among Judaizers:**

- **Jewish Christians...The "Jewish Christians" first were Jews who believed in Jesus, yet continued to observe Jewish law.**
- **Judaizing Christians...The "Judaizing Christians" consisted of Gentile Christians who adopted certain aspects of Jewish law; some of them had observed certain Jewish practices prior to their conversion (to Christianity) because of their attraction to these customs. Others had not kept any Jewish rites before becoming Christian (Robert Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews, pp. 69-70).**
- **God-fearers...The "Godfearers" are the third class of people were variously called "God-fearers," God-worshippers," or "sympathizers." They were half-way Jews. Scholars differ in their interpretation of archaeological and literary evidence. Some authorities believe that God-fearers are a literary and theological invention. Others are convinced, from archaeological remains and literary documentation, of the existence and ubiquity throughout the Roman Empire of Godfearers. Saul Lieberman, Greek In Jewish Palestine, pp. 77, 81, states that the God-fearers were semi-proselytes who existed in the first century C.E. and were highly regarded by the rabbis. The chief identifying mark of all groups was the same:**
  - **observance of some Jewish law such as the celebration of festivals and the Sabbath,**
  - **studying Jewish Scriptures,**
  - **and keeping certain fasts.**

**If you have studied with Bet Emet for any length of time you have seen from our research that Gentiles can be shown to observe the "appointed days" [Sabbath/Festivals/Feasts] of YHWH long before there were any Jews or Mosaic Law given at Sinai. That means God had imparted to them Divine Revelation of His will in the matter and the Hebrew Scriptures are replete with examples of non-Jews observing the Sabbath, Passover, and other Festivals. Acts 15 teaches us that what "seemed good to the Holy Spirit" and was termed "necessary" was that the Gentiles were expected to learn the Torah "as Moses is taught in the synagogues every Sabbath":**

***Acts 15:21 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city {reference is to Synagogues in both Palestine and outside Israel in Asia Minor] them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)***

**But this was nothing knew as we find in Isaiah 56 which expresses God's will for the non-Jew who wishes to draw close to Him:**

***Isa 56:2-7 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 Neither let the son of the stranger [ term for non-Jews], that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs [again a non-Jew] that keep my sabbaths [notice plural which encompasses both the weekly sabbath and high sabbaths called "feasts"], and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters [notice a greater reward than even the Jews can expect]: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger [again the term for non-Jews], that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. (KJV)***

**There are references to Judaizers and God-fearers in Philo, Josephus, Acts, Greek and Roman writers, and the**

**Talmud. Judaizers and God-fearers seem to have been very numerous and their large numbers probably resulted from proselytizing by Jews. Understand that this phenomena is the natural outcome of Israel being a Priest to the nation as well as a "light unto the nations." Salo Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, pp. 170, 370-372, states that according Louis Feldman, the concept of God-fearers *(theosobeis* in Greek and *yirai shamayim* in Hebrew) was not limited to Gentile sympathizers with Judaism but also referred to full converts to Judaism and to natural-born Jews. It is difficult to determine exactly who these Judaizers and God-fearers were in terms of their original background and to what extent they overlapped. Probably, more often than not, God-fearers were Gentiles, who maintained an attachment to Jewish practices which we have shown repeated are illustrated in the Hebrew Scriptures both before and after Moses. They attended, and were accepted in, synagogues where they had made an accommodation to Judaism. They were monotheists and participated in some ceremonial requirements of the Law such as Sabbath and dietary observance. This facts alone flies in the face of Paul's distortion of the incident of Antioch which again has been altered to hide the real truth of the incident where Peter and Barnabas left Paul and his fellowship over Paul's compromises in table-fellowship and idolatry when the "men from James" came down and found Paul compromising the commandments of Idolatry at table fellowship in his ministry to non-Jews. However, they found circumcision a deterrent to full conversion and Paul is right in his portrayal of this problem in Galatians as forced circumcision for Gentile acceptance by Jews was used by many Jews to keep the non-Jew at a distance. Judaizers were either Gentiles or Jews who had espoused a belief in Jesus, but continued to observe certain Jewish practices. Those who were "original" Gentiles were a target of Paul's proselytizing efforts, especially if they had converted to Christianity and continued to observe Jewish rites.**

**Paul was angry and frustrated that so many followers of Jesus were Judaizers who remained stubbornly faithful to Jewish practices. Jewish missionaries were attracting actual Paul's converts and potential Christians to their Jewish religion. Redaction history by Rome, the winner of the wars against the Jews, has so altered Biblical history that few Christians realize that the vast majority of non-Jews who came to God practiced a form of "Biblical Judaism" up until the early 4th century when Constantine would change all of this at the Council of Nicea. Because of the impact and lure of Biblical Judaism as a world religion Gentile Christianity was forced to regard Judaism as a serious rival for the allegiance of pagans and committed Christians alike (John Gager, Origins of Anti-Semitism, p. 6). Judaizing Christians were objects of scorn and animosity by Gentile Church leaders from Paul to John Chrysostom, the fourth century patristic whose vituperative sermons against Jews and Judaizers were notorious. John Chrysostom was a bishop and Church Father. He preached eight sermons in Antioch in 386-7. They were directed against Judaizing Christians who were observing Jewish holidays and customs along with Christian rites. He considered this apostasy. Chrysostom fought against the attractions of Judaism to his Christian congregation. His sermons were tirades which could and did serve as models for obscene attacks on Judaism and provocations to violence against Jews. This man was elevated by his church to sainthood. One only needs to read Rosemary Ruether, Faith and Fratricide, especially Chapter 3, to see this for yourself.**

**What is unknown to the vast majority of Christians is that several epistles were written by Gentiles in the names of the Jewish Apostles and were done so in order to function in their attacks on Jewish missionaries and the backsliding proselytes of Paul when presented with the truth by the real Apostles and emissaries from the Jerusalem Church which actually were true followers of Jesus. The Gentile responses to true Biblical faith created the need for epistles and letters intended for Gentile audiences that range from warnings to avoid those who supposedly mislead them away from Pauline Christianity [the influence of the Jerusalem church] to threats of forfeiting salvation by leaving the faith as taught by Paul. We have here the conflict of two competing Gospels; Paul's and Jesus; and few Christians ever notice it when all the Christian Church does is usually preach on one Scripture at a time. It is hard to see the whole picture when you only look at one or two passages at a time and most Sunday sermons are built upon such a "non thematic" presentation along with strong allegory. Thus the need for serious study by Gentile Christianity today in order to recover the true faith of Jesus as it can be found in the New Testament but only after understanding through prior study what truly was in "the mind of Christ." Without such prior knowledge it is almost impossible to read the New Testament and know accurately how to**

**separate the wheat from the chaff.**

# HOW PAUL HANDLED THIS PROBLEM OF CONFLICTING GOSPELS

**Over time with repeated failure Paul realized that prevention was the best cure. He, therefore, admonished his reader to stay away from "unbelievers" who questioned or challenged his teachings. Let us not forget for one moment whom these "unbelievers" were; those who did not accept Paul's theology but rather followed James and the Jerusalem Church over Paul. Hard as it is for Christians to comprehend or even believe such a division between Paul and James, Peter, and John existed, these "unbelievers" as called by Paul were in reality James, Peter, and the Jerusalem church and those who followed them and who held to the real teachings of Jesus which they espoused. This is the terrible irony of only reading the Pauline epistles without a balanced study into Biblical history and manuscript evidences that betray such additions to the New Testament to cover over this schism. These men, unlike Paul, knew Jesus and his teachings personally and could not tolerate lies taught in Jesus name; thus the continued persecution of Paul by those influenced by the Jerusalem church. Equally hard to for the uneducated Christian to comprehend is the fact that those who followed Paul around as mentioned in his epistles and hassled him and even beat him were likewise those from the Jerusalem Church who were trying desperately to correct the false teachings being spread in Jesus' name whom they had known personally and well knew Jesus never believed or taught such heresy as Paul espoused. So effective was Roman redaction and alteration of Biblical history and well as their almost total destruction of such incriminating evidence to these facts that had it not been for major achievement in archeology in the last several hundred years little would be known about the serious split between the Jerusalem church and Paul although we find hints in the New Testament of Paul's duplicity and apostasy. What again Christians fail to understand is that Judaism allowed for religious pluralism as salvation was never based upon what one believed about the Messiah so even though Paul taught "another gospel" and tied it to Eternal Life. Thus you can now understand the main focus of the Jerusalem church was to correct such misunderstandings being spread among them Gentiles in Jesus' name and make sure the non-Jews were taught of their own unique Covenant with God that when obeyed in faith resulted in Eternal Life; the Covenant of Noah (Acts 15). Paul was admonished by James in Acts 15 and 16 to take letters to the Gentile congregations in Asia minor with his ruling concerning the Covenant of Noah for the non-Jews but we find Paul would leave Jerusalem and do otherwise and write Galatians which is his defense of his position and which details his split with the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2) which will lead ultimately to him being recalled to Jerusalem to give answers to James about his heretical conduct again in Acts 21.**

**In 2 Cor 6:14-16 Paul cautioned his respondents against being "yoked together with unbelievers" whom he likened to Beial (meaning worthless or wickedness in Hebrew). Today Christianity often uses this passage in marriage counseling but the real meaning of the passage in a historical sense goes much deeper. Historically "being yoked with unbelievers" was used as a code word for Jews and others who did not accept Paul's doctrines. Thus, Paul built up the "logical" sequence: those who disagree with his teachings are unbelievers (no matter their monotheistic beliefs); unbelievers are wicked; therefore, disagreement with Paul is wickedness which can and must be avoided by shunning those who reject his religious ideas and his unique "gospel." So effective has been this agenda that today if anyone questions Paul or his religious ideas which deviate from not only the Torah but the teachings of Jesus one is often said to be "possessed with demons." Study never hurt anyone; especially in light of the fact that it was considered the highest form of worship in the first century by Jews like Jesus!**

**Paul continued this theme in Rom. 16:17-18 when he urged his respondents *"to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way, contrary to the teachings you have learned. Keep away from them....By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people."***

**Think with me for a minute. Paul was bringing to the Gentiles unfamiliar with Judaism a Jesus foreign to the Jerusalem Church and Paul knew that these Gentiles would never know the difference between the real and the counterfeit; especially when a little Judaism is merged with enough paganism to make it seem as if these Gentiles did not have to give up anything about their "godmen" and "mediators." Paul's unique religious synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism was a winner for those he intended to reach. The only problem is that the Jerusalem Church knew better and would not tolerate such things being taught in Jesus' name and thus Paul labeled them as "unbelievers" to those he approached in Asia Minor. Many not knowing the difference fell for it; but man did not who had occasioned the synagogues previously where Moses was taught! Here Paul would win few converts!**

**The same idea obsessed Paul in 2 Cor. 11:3-6 when he warned against being led astray by false apostles [again a reference to the Jerusalem apostles], as Eve had been beguiled by the serpent. He expressed disappointment in the people for their tolerance in listening to other apostles who preached a gospel different from his. No wonder; the lie would be exposed for what it really was and Paul's gospel shown to be false by those who personally knew Jesus and let us not forget that Paul never met him but relied on some supposed vision. Let us never forget that the New Testament mentions that a true qualification for being an apostle is that one must have been a witness to Jesus' ministry and Paul never qualified in this requirement; this is one reason among many besides his message that prevented the Jerusalem church accepting his "apostleship." It is more than probable that in the many rejections that Paul suffered in his ministry as well as the failure of his apostleship to be accepted by others as documented in Biblical as well as extra-biblical materials that Paul, after being rejected by the Sadducees and Pharisees, "sent himself;" a play off the the word "apostle." Never underestimate the ego of this man. No wonder his epistles are continually filled with his defense of his "apostleship" when it was challenged almost everywhere. But again let us not forget that winners write history and Rome made Paul a hero in the New Testament when extra-biblical materials indicate otherwise like the Ebionite letters and the Pseudo-Clementine epistles which provide damaging evidence to the portrayal of Paul in the New Testament.**

**He cautioned his listeners to beware of those who *"are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us so that you may be zealous for them" (Gal. 4:17).* This is an exact description of Paul's objective: to win over converts who would be committed exclusively to his doctrines and to turn those converts against their former beliefs and against those who still held them. In psychology it is called projection, for he projected onto the Judaizers his own methods and goals.**

# DID PAUL PRACTICE WHAT HE PREACHED?...YOU BE THE JUDGE:

**In the next part of this article we will examine Paul and how he handled his adversaries and see if he "followed what he preached." You might be surprised. Let us continue the second and last part of this article.**

**Paul endured no competition. He was not about to give the same quarter to others which he had been afforded. Prior to becoming the apostle exclusively to the Gentiles, Paul had preached to Jews in synagogues according to Acts. It is conventional wisdom among New Testament scholars to consider events in Acts which are not corroborated in Paul's epistles as unreliable. Despite this, some scholars, like Lloyd Gaston (in Paul and the Torah, p. 16) believe that Paul was a student of Gamliel, although there is no claim in Paul's letters to that effect or evidence in them of sufficient knowledge of Torah or even of Hebrew to warrant a conviction that he studied at such an advanced place of Jewish learning. In fact the evidence in many of Paul's epistles portrays Paul's inability to demonstrate Kal Va Homer which is one of the simplest ways Rabbis reasoned and taught. This shows the lack of mastery of Hebrew reasoning by Paul who is supposed to be a crack student of Gamilel. He and his colleagues had entered the synagogues of Greece and Asia Minor claiming to be Jews. They had been given freedom to preach about Jesus and his messiahship and resurrection. Of course they had gone beyond those beliefs of the Nazarenes and had propounded their own dogma. Wherever Paul had success in**

**convincing his listeners, he did not want them exposed to any challenge to his philosophy or to any views which might attract his converts (back) to Judaism. Hence his constant warnings against contacts with "unbelievers," whom he transformed into the enemy. His successors learned Paul's lessons well and put them into practice.**

**Paul's strongest invectives against Judaizers are found in his Epistle to the Galatians. It might come as a shock to you but the most anti-Law passage in the Bible, Galatians chapter 3, was not in the Galatians Paul wrote but "appears" only in the Second New Testament put together after 180 A.D. by Irenaeus in his response to Marcion's First New Testament of 150 A.D. which was a collection of all the Pauline literature that existed "at that time." Somebody is writing in Paul's name telling us to reject the whole of the Law! Be that as it may, Paul denounced any other teaching other than his as false. His alone was true and only he had the true teachings of Jesus although he had never met him (THINK). He pronounced a solemn curse on those who preached a different doctrine from the one Paul taught (which again was a synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism). Let us read his words in 1:6-9:**

***I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be cursed. As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be cursed.***

**Such was Paul's reaction to the competition of Judaizers! How different are these words from his self-righteous claim in 1 Cor 4: 12-13:**

***When we are cursed, we bless...When we are slandered, we answer kindly.***

**Not only did Paul's opponents not curse him--they do not record a single imprecation against him--but Paul would do otherwise and initiate the anathema. Nor was he slandered. His adversaries had come to clarify certain crucial religious matters. Paul's churches in Galatia (and possibly elsewhere) were visited by Christian Jews who preached at least a partial observance of Mosaic Law. Today, in normative Judaism, there is no such designation as a Christian Jew. Jews for Jesus are not considered Jews by any recognized group in Judaism. At the time of Paul, the Nazarene Church believed that Jesus was a messiah, not a deity, and that observance of Mosaic Law was incumbent on its adherents. This group was a sect of Judaism but does not reflect the main Messianic beliefs of mainline Judaism since the true Messianic Prophecies go unfulfilled. It persisted as a small sect for three or four centuries after Paul until its members merged with Christianity or Judaism. Most became Christians. After the Council of Nicea and Constantine's influence and by the fifth century there were no more Judaizing Christians or Jewish Christians. The immediate issue at hand was whether Christians of Gentile or Jewish background should observe Jewish law. Apparently missionaries from Jerusalem presented themselves and Paul as subject to the authority of the Jerusalem Church. Paul denied this and responded with vilification of his antagonists and their religious ideas.**

**Paul asserted that he received his commission directly from Jesus in a revelation and insisted on his complete independence from the Council in Jerusalem. He was to answer to no one! He went on to complain that the problem arose because *"false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves" (Gal. 2:4).***

**The freedom Paul wanted was to distort the Torah by making spurious claims about it, such as insisting that the entire law must be obeyed in order for its followers to be in the covenant (receive salvation) and disregarding or denying the importance of repentance in Judaism for its adherents to achieve God's forgiveness (grace). But Judaism never taught the doctrine that one had to obey the Law perfectly to be saved as**

**Paul would have us believe! This subversion of Judaism was offered to unsuspecting Gentile listeners and likewise it is yet done today to unsuspecting Gentiles who have not the slightest idea of what Judaism taught or real Biblical faith teaches about salvation as found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Many of the people who came to hear him mistakenly believed he represented the religion of the Jerusalem Church inasmuch as that was the central authority and original disseminator of the faith after Jesus' death. Ironically and historically this was not the case! Little has changed today when Christianity rely more on the epistles for sermon material than the Synoptic Gospels.**

**For all his claims of independence, Paul was obliged to report to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15, Gal 2:1-9) and this shows us not only who has the authority but the true message of Jesus. Not only that but Paul is instructed to bring "atonement offerings" and "blood sacrifices" in the Temple by James, the leader of Jesus' church, long after Jesus is dead (30 plus years as seen in Acts 21) indicating they evidently did not believe Jesus was the final sacrifice for sin or anything for that matter as we have been taught after Rome infused pagan atonement into these religious documents and applied it to Jesus. He had been reluctant to submit to the Jerusalem church and had delayed visiting there for as long as he could. Accounts of Paul's preaching against the Torah had reached Jerusalem. The Council members were apparently disturbed enough to request his appearance before them and to send out envoys to clarify their position and to repudiate Paul's. If he indeed were not accountable to the Jerusalem Church, as he insisted, he would not have presented himself before it.**

**Paul recognized the implications for himself and his religion if the Galatians returned to Jewish practices. He met the danger head-on. He repeated the usual arguments of "justification by faith" and "no righteousness through law" and then pulled out all the stops as he resorted to hyperbole. He equated Judaism with enslavement. He rhetorically asked his listeners:**

***How is it you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you. (Gal 4:9-11)***

**If we take the time to "think" the above verse is very telling. The key word is "again" and from this we learn that Gentiles who had previously adopted Paul's "Torahless" gospel were not returning AGAIN to special days and months and seasons. Again this is code for Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths which they had given up when accepting Paul's gospel. But with the witness of the Jerusalem Church and other apostles of that day and age which carried with them the correction of Paul's theology they were now forsaking Paulinism and becoming "Judaizers" and this angered Paul. We see the same thing in the Antioch incident when the men from James comes to "spy out Paul's freedom" from the Law and under rebuke the whole church moves next door and leaves Paul without his church (see the series of articles on this website about the Antioch Incident). So what is depicted in this picture in Gal. 4:9-11 is a return to Jewish and Hebrew faith whereby these "Godfearers" were returning to Sabbaths and Biblical festivals which the Torah ordained for the non-Jew as well as the Jew.**

**What Paul feared was the loss of his converts in Galatia and the spread of this trend to other towns and cities and churches. In the heat of battle Paul defended his turf against those from whom he has snatched it in his proselytizing. With his back to the wall, he responded with name-calling and malicious comparisons. He termed the laws "miserable principles" and the return to them, enslavement. The "slavery" Paul threatened for observing special occasions has long since been taken over by his Church. Instead of the Sabbath day, Christians subsequently designated Sunday as holy. As for a special month in which there are restrictions or limitations, the Church was not lax in instituting such a custom. For six weeks before Easter, during Lent, Christians give up certain foods and engage in other rites to commemorate Jesus' fasting in the wilderness. How different is this in terms of restrictions from the mourning period which Jews observe during the month of Av, a Hebrew month which usually falls in August. For three weeks before the Ninth of Av religious Jews refrain from swimming or celebrations in memory of the destruction of both Temples. Paul may have referred to the first month of the Hebrew calendar as a special season for it marks the celebration of**

**several holidays. Christians, likewise, enjoy a Christmas season which, for many, lasts well over a month. Although the Sabbatical year has not been incorporated into Christian theology, most academics eagerly avail themselves of its benefits. The observance of the sabbatical year in agriculture has proven beneficial to the earth and the farmers who depend on its produce whether or not they live by the Mosaic laws. Paul's warning of hardships--enslavement-- resulting from keeping special holy days and festivals by ritual practices was a red herring. Every nation, religion, and culture has its special events observed with specific rites or ceremonies that add a richness to the lives of the people and a uniqueness to the individual groups.**

**Good taste and fair play did not figure in Paul's preaching when he spoke of his opponents. He must have been in a rage when he wished *"they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves."* He was referring to his rivals who practiced and advocated circumcision (Gal 5:12) which Abraham, himself a non-Jew, did prior to his keeping the Passover in a prophetic sense (Gen. 17 and 18) where the Rabbis teach us that it was "unleavened" cakes that Abraham made after circumcising himself (a requirement for any Gentile to observe the Passover).**

He accused the Judaizers of urging circumcision on his audience in order to become indistinguishable from the Jews and thereby to avoid persecution. The dishonesty of his claim was only surpassed by its irony in light of subsequent Jewish history. Both in Paul's time and afterward there was no record of Jewish persecution of Gentiles. Furthermore, the latter were welcome in their synagogues, a fact which caused Paul distress. In the course of history during which the Church reached ascendancy, Jewish men were identified by their circumcision for the purpose of Christian persecution; not the other way around as Paul would have us believe.

**In the same manner of verbal excess which he used in Galatians, Paul wrote in PHIL 3:2:**

***Watch out for those dogs, those who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.***

**Paul knew, either from his own experience since he claimed to be circumcised or from the many Jews he had met, that circumcision is not mutilation.**

Paul's verbal assaults on his adversaries were often venomous, despite his avowal of love and the need for love of humanity. Although he said that the Spirit brought love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22), it didn't seem to have that effect on him; When he was dealing with opponents or competitors, his brotherly love disappeared into anathemas, namecalling, spurious accusations, and intimidation. His attacks showed neither restraint nor compassion. His extreme feelings and behavior project a picture of an unstable personality.

**In the Epistle to the Colossians the author wrote of freedom from human regulations through life with Christ. The writer primarily reprimanded gnosticizing Christian tendencies, and** secondarily, Judaizing tendencies.

**This Epistle censures the worshipping of angels.** The writer urged the Colossians to ignore talk of food and drink, festivals and the Sabbath day by people who worship angels (2:16-18). **Within the context of the letter and the time it was written, this passage was not directed against Jews.** Unfortunately, however, most non-scholars and typical Christians reading this letter generations and centuries later might well assume that Jews were the object of this criticism, inasmuch as they are principally associated with Sabbath observance and food restrictions. Since the author of Colossians connected the people who observed these practices with angel-worship, it seems necessary to note that Judaism forbids worshipping angels as it does people or another deity. In some pseudepigraphal writings there is mention of angels. This is precisely why such literature was unacceptable in the codified Jewish Scriptures. This charge was discussed in the previous chapter. Angels as "mediators" is not accepted in Judaism nor is any "mediator" which brings into question again Paul's theology:

***1 Tim 2:5 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; (KJV)***

**The chief motivation for the Epistle to the Hebrews was the fear of Christian converts backsliding to Judaism. The unknown author warned that a return to Judaism from Christianity would mean a permanent loss of salvation; there would be no second chance.** ***"It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened...who have shared in the Holy Spirit,...if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance because they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace" (Heb 6:4-6 along with 10:26-31).***

**So we see that every technique available to the apostles was put into play to forestall the return of converts to Judaism or the participation in Jewish practices of Gentile Christians or Judaizing Christians. Paul expressed his determination to cut off access to his followers in his statement in 2 Cor. 11:12:** ***"I will continue doing what I am doing to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be equal with us in the things they boast about."*** **Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, were discouraged from any contacts, social or religious, with Judaizers and from continuing any Jewish observances alongside of Christian beliefs, for fear that such activity would weaken and undermine their Pauline Christian faith. These signs of insecurity are common among founders of new ideologies. They feel threatened and perceive the need to protect themselves by isolating their members from the established rival groups. Paul's efforts to prevent Jewish proselytizing and to preclude meaningful contacts between Jews and Christians set a precedent for his Church for hundreds of years after his death.**

**Another factor here was Paul's personality and ambition. Paul was a go-getter, par excellence. He originated a concept and, like a latter-day entrepreneur, he developed the market for it. He was a master of public relations and endowed with all the skills that profession called for: community organization, public speaking, fund-raising, familiarity with the potential patrons, and enthusiasm for the product. He had resourcefulness and a keen awareness of the competition. He tried to prevent competition where he could and fought it aggressively elsewhere in order to retain his clientele and enlarge his market share. As one scholar put it, "When Paul became a Christian, he gained status and power in the Christian community which he protected fiercely, especially when his authority was at stake" (A. Saldarini, Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees, p. 143).**

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

**In this article much was given the reader to make him "think." Much of what is contained in this article comes from years of intense study and scrutiny of many documents that exist in a host of books and libraries on this topic. Church tradition is only as good as it reflects truth. Sadly Gentile Christianity has received a distorted image of the Paul of history as portrayed in documents in our New Testament which instead of truth often portray the antisemitic sentiments of the Gentile establishment called the Roman Catholic Church. Of course since being conditioned that said document is "infallible" since childhood no one perceives the need to study anything it seems and failing to do so sets himself to believe a lie since it is the only input one receives. When you rehearse lies you believe lies. What you do with this information is up to you but understand we as follower of Jesus have been sold a bill of good that is a fraud when compared with the truth as it existed in the Jerusalem Church in the first century among the true followers of Jesus. I challenge all our readers to try to prove this information wrong as it amply exists outside the pages of your New Testament; sadly it never made it's way onto the pages of our Bibles which Rome gave us. We have often worshipped God in vain and accepted a counterfeit Jesus of Rome's and Paul's making while James and the Jerusalem Church who knew Jesus personally and tried to counter Paulinism goes unheard today. Well, the rest if up to you; but if you read this article you have begun to break the shell on the redaction of Paul and his apostasy (see http://paulproblem.faithweb.com). Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.**

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# PAUL'S DENIGRATION OF THE JEWS IN HIS EPISTLES

In the Pauline epistles, besides attacks on the Torah, there were direct, personal, verbal assaults on Jews. **In Paul's very first epistle, 1 Thessalonians, which was written around 50 C.E., a scurrilous accusation against Jews of deicide is found. Many scholars claim that this is an interpolation by a later editor or redactor of the letter. This charge, however, was stated in all four Gospels, and figured prominently in Matthew and Acts. Scholars also claim that the Lukan indictment is the result of an alteration by an editor. Many, if not most, Christian believers have difficulty in accepting these scholarly claims and read the Christian Scriptures as coming in entirety from the hand of the person to whom the work is attributed.**

**A barrage against the Jews was unleashed in 1 Thes. 2:14- 16 as the speaker addressed his converts:**

***For you brothers, become imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus. You suffered from your countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved.***

Either Paul or the later Christian editors of his letters endeavored to discredit the Jews as savage killers of men based on the fiction that they had killed the prophets. Although generations had passed since the prophets had lived, Jews were indicted. Thus the Jews were accused of killing people who had not been killed, at a time that they, the alleged killers, had not been alive. Parallel to the guilt imposed on Jews in the first century for the death of prophets they had not even known is the charge laid on Jews for 1900 years of deicide against a man they had never known.

Another unsubstantiated charge was that Paul had been driven out of Judea. **From all that he and others wrote, Paul chose to leave Jerusalem on his missionary journeys to spread his word and establish his religion.** Nor is there any foundation to the inference that the Nazarenes suffered from their fellow Jews. No evidence exists of Jews persecuting Christians in Judea**.**

In the most serious accusation, deicide, Paul or his interpolator carefully avoided any mention of Roman culpability. In fact, he made no reference to the Romans at all, even though everyone knew of their presence and power in Judea and the kind of capital punishments they meted out. This reticence concerning the Romans can be understood as prudence born of fear. While he cannot be faulted for that fear, neither can he be lauded for the resultant behavior. Regardless of how scared he was of the Romans, Paul or his ghost writer was not justified in blaming Jews for the Romans' crimes.

**Aside from being dishonest, this accusation of deicide is the most heinous and wicked in the epistles. It has had immeasurable repercussions and caused untold harm and human suffering. This false charge was repeated down through the ages after Paul by evangelists and patristics, by popes and Christian leaders, and by rank-and-file devotees in pogroms, crusades, and concentration camps.**

**In Phil. 3 there is an hateful attack, the object of which were the "Judaizing Christians." Since they are not identified by name but by description as *"those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh,"* most readers of, and believers in, the New Testament understand this last term to be a code word for Jews since they were the only people practicing circumcision. There were no Moslems yet. This is how verses 3:19-20 read:**

***their god is their stomach and their glory is in their shame; their mind is on earthly things.***

**And by contrast, Paul wrote about himself and his associates in the next verse:**

***But our citizenship is in heaven.***

**This portrayal, whether of Gentile Judaizers or Jews, has fixed a picture of Jews in the minds of Christians as carnal creatures, concerned only with the satisfaction of their material and bodily needs. From Chrysostom to Luther these same words were used to defame Jews. It was easy, for centuries afterward, to assault such beings physically and verbally because they were not in the same category of humanity as the spiritual Christians. Western literature is full of Jewish fictitious characters which fit Paul's description. From Shakespeare's Shylock to Dickens' Fagin, from the unsavory Jews drawn by Voltaire to Balzac's Jewish usurer, Gobseck, we see the stereotyped caricatures of Jews which had their genesis in Paul's depiction. To suggest that this was merely the rhetoric of the day neither excuses nor justifies it. Hitler's inflammatory speeches were also the rhetoric of the day. Moreover, neither Paul nor the evangelists nor the editors of the New Testament found a precedent for such rhetoric in the Hebrew Scriptures. No similar, spurious accusations were part of the Tanakh.**

**Another criticism leveled at Jews by way of an unflattering comparison with Christians is found in 1 Cor. 1:22-23 in which Paul wrote,**

***"Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom but we preach Christ crucified..."***

**Not only is this a false charge, it is curious coming from the father of a religion based on miracles.**

**Answer for yourself: What is Jesus' resurrection if not a miraculous occurrence which Christians must believe as dogma?**

**Jesus' seemingly magical cures of lepers, cripples, and the blind and the even more remarkable revival of the dead Lazarus, were considered miracles which served as proof of his divinity or divine powers. His ability to walk on water, to turn water into wine, along with a host of other wondrous happenings are crucial to Christianity. All the "mysteries" in Christianity must be understood in terms of the miraculous. Judaism, by contrast, does not depend on miracles for its validity. Although many miraculous events are recorded in the Tanakh-the parting of the Red Sea (or Sea of Reeds), Joshua's halting of the sun and moon in their paths, Elijah's and Elisha's dividing of the waters and the latter increasing the oil supply of the widow, Daniel's safety in the lion's den, etc.--there was a tendency from early Talmudic times to rationalize and allegorize the miracles. Judaism has disparaged miracles as props of faith (Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Judaism and Christianity: The Difference, p. 36). In later centuries there arose certain Hassidic sects whose members revered "miracle**

**workers." However, neither the miracles nor the workers have any authority in Jewish law--even among their admirers. Already in the Torah came the warning against heeding a prophet who performs miracles and urges people to follow other gods. *"You shall not pay attention to his words"* is the admonition in Dt. 13:4. It was not Jews who needed miracles or magic to bolster their faith in God and their Bible. The value of the latter was in its ethical teachings. If Jews depended on signs and miracles, the laws would not have held such sway over them.**

**As Solomon Schechter stated, "In the whole of Rabbinic literature there is not one single instance on record that a Rabbi was ever asked by his colleagues to demonstrate the soundness of his doctrine, or the truth of a disputed Halachic case, by performing a miracle....Not a single miracle is reported for Hillel and Shammai both of whom exercised such an important influence on Judaism" (S. Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, pp. 6-7). Stories in the Midrash, Haggadah, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Philo have no religious authority in Judaism. Even if some midrashic ideas and works were extant in Paul's time, his knowledge of Hebrew and association with Jewish scholars were too limited for him to be acquainted with these concepts. This shows how unfamiliar Paul was with contemporary Judaism despite his self-description as a knowledgeable Pharisee.**

**Paul's complaint in Romans that Jews bragged about their relationship to God (2:17) and boasted about the Law (2:28, 3:27) was discussed earlier in a previous article in terms of the Chosen People concept. The apostle's description of Jews as bragging and boastful was his way of depicting them as arrogant. This was one more taunt and personal attack. If Jews were proud that God had conferred the Torah on them and that they had accepted it and lived up to its precepts, their pride was justifiable. It might be compared to the pride which Paul and his followers expressed about the gospel that they proclaimed. Paul took pride in disdaining the Law and asserting the impossibility of abiding by it or gaining forgiveness through it. Jews have demonstrated their appreciation of the divine gift by their pride in it, as well as by their efforts to fulfill the laws and cling to them in the face of criticism by Paul and his successors.**

**It is a bit surprising that Paul accused Jews of boastfulness when he was vulnerable to this charge by his own admission in 2 Cor. 11. There he told of all he had endured-- hunger, thirst, cold, danger, and being beaten, stoned, imprisoned, and shipwrecked. It seemed that his recital of his hardships was due to a wish to impress his respondents with his suffering and self-sacrifice. By relating this, Paul may have also expected to convey to his listeners the idea that through his agony he came closer to Jesus in the latter's final anguish. All of this is human and understandable and immodest. But Paul displayed an even greater tendency to bragging in his insistence that he was selected by God to spread the gospel. He made this claim when he thought his teachings were under attack. Here are his words:**

- **Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...(2 Cor. 1:1).**
- **Paul, an apostle--sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God, the Father who raised him from the dead (Gal. 1:15).**
- **But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man (GAL 1:15).**

**Answer for yourself: How is this claim of chosenness different in essence from that of the Jews?**

**Moses did not boast of his special role in receiving and transmitting the Torah as did Paul in his capacity as disseminator of the gospel.**

# WHO IS THE ANTICHRIST...THE JEWS? YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING

**Before leaving this section of the epistles, we should say a few words about the "antichrist." Some scholars insist**

**that the antichrist was someone within the Church. Martin Luther, for example, considered the pope of his day to be the antichrist. Many Christians have labeled their adversaries who are coreligionists by this name. Nevertheless, the Jews, both in the past and present, have been the prime target of this epithet. This term is used in letters 1 and 2 John. 1 John 2:22 says:**

***Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is Christ. Such a man is the antichrist--he denies the Father and the Son.***

**In 2 John 7 the antichrist is described as the deceiver.**

**The Johannine letters did not start out primarily as anti-Jewish. They reflect a bitter intra-Christian dispute caused by a schism in the Johannine community. Invectives and name-calling were rife. Much of this history is unknown to lay Christians.**

**In later generations the Church used the term against Jews. Consequently, it did not require a great leap of imagination for readers of these short letters to connect the antichrist to Jews who do not recognize Jesus as the christ or the deity. As a result, in the Christian mind, lying and deception become the trademarks of Jews, the "deniers" and "unbelievers."**

**Jews, as portrayed in the epistles, had no redeeming qualities. Whether written by Paul, or disciples whose thoughts are extensions of his, the letters depict Jews as deicidal, murderous, brutal, carnal, superstitious, arrogant, and deceitful. A litany of worse traits would be hard to assemble. In short, Jews constituted a composite picture of the enemy. In Rom. 11:28, again a passage not in the original Romans until 180 A.D., a pro-Paul writer actually used the Greek word for "alienated" to describe the Jews which, significantly, has been rendered as "enemy" in the overwhelming majority of translations of the letter. For that is how Paul's characterization of Jews impressed his readers and sadly has done so for over 1900 years at present.**

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# WHO IS THE REAL PAUL: A MAN OF TOLERANCE OR BIGOTRY?

**Unless you are an accomplished student and a discerning reader of Paul's letters you might never notice that Paul's epistles reveal many anomalies and contradictions. These contradictions lie in many areas but in this article I wish to address the tension between tolerance and bigotry and between love and hate which is evident in his writings. Rom. 14 is a case in point. Paul devoted several verses in Rom. 14 (verses 1-21) to an eloquent appeal for tolerance in his adherents. He urged them not to judge others if their customs were different in the foods they abstained from or the holidays they celebrated. Some of his most liberal and broad-minded statements are found in this passage:**

***Why do you look down on your brother? For we all stand before God's judgment seat (14:10). Let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way (14:13).***

**Yet the Pauline epistles reveal to us that Paul did not follow his own advice. After preaching tolerance for others and advising his listeners not to judge others, he reversed himself in the very last line of the chapter by saying, *"Everything which does not come from faith is sin."***

**Answer for yourself: Now, who is judging? The last line is clearly judgment of others. When push came to shove, Paul's non-judgmental attitude did not extend to brothers who were not of his brotherhood.**

**The same inconsistency is manifest between the apostle's avowals of love for humanity, on the one hand, and the expressions of animosity for a large segment of it, on the other. He spoke of love in the abstract for all mankind but did not apply it to an entire people. He called for accepting differences in others but could not tolerate any deviation from his beliefs. For those who disagreed with him, Paul had neither love nor tolerance.**

**One of the most beautiful and oft-repeated passages in the New Testament is contained in Paul's epistle, 1 Cor. 13. Here are its (justifiably) most famous verses:**

***If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves. Love never fails (1-8). ... And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love (13).***

***What a tragedy for mankind, what a catastrophe for Jewry, that these***

## *magnificent thoughts did not pervade all of Paul's letters or, constitute a dominant part of them as they have come down to us.*

**How different the history of the human race might have been if these ideas had prevailed as Paul's legacy to his religious descendants. Instead, his angry attacks, unrestrained loathing, and uninhibited aggression against Jews, Judaism, and their sympathizers set an unfortunate pattern and precedent for his followers to emulate. "Pauline anti-Judaism does not arise as the left-hand of his christology but rather as a right-handed dart aimed straight at the heart of Judaism, viz., Torah. The common understanding of Paul's relation to Judaism in most Christian circles is the complete elimination of an Israel faithful to the Torah...According to the most universal interpretation of Paul wittingly, or unwittingly, his theology has become a major source of Christian anti-Judaism." Paul's lip service to brotherly love was translated by his spiritual followers into vicious assaults on Jews as easily discerned by any cursory reading of the Gentile Fathers of the Church which were heavily influenced by Paulinism. One only needs to read Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Luther to get what I mean.**

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# THE VIEW OF THE JEW IN THE GOSPELS AND THE BOOK OF ACTS...IS IT TRUTHFUL?

**Without some serious study on your part most likely you will not be able to understand when I say that the Gospels are tales combining myths and facts, dogmas and historical data. They affirm the goodness and wisdom of Jesus and at the same time, in some instances, the pestilent stupidity of Jews. That being the case I would ask you to stop and "think" for a moment that if that depiction of the Jews is true then how stupid is God the Creator to entrust them with Divine Revelation for the world and call them a Holy Nation and a Royal Priesthood which is to shed it's light upon the nations! Upon some investigative study into antisemitism and the truth behind the New Testament and it's creation one finds that the wheels of such tragic denigration of the Jews turn by the force of the hatred by the Gentile for the Jew and his religion. The stories in these Gospels resemble morality plays with fixed and stylized roles assigned to each character. Romans, centurions, and Gentiles, together with the Christians themselves, are "the good guys." Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, priests, and teachers of the Law are the villains. Despite disparate loyalties and beliefs among these Jewish parties, they are lumped together under one pejorative heading called "the Jews." And of course, this term "the Jews" was given a negative connotation by the early Gentile Church and done so in the name of a supposed Apostle (John). It amazes me that John, a Jewish apostle of Jesus, could have been antisemitic!**

**The four Gospels relate what early Christians believed about the life, teachings, and death of Jesus. However, certain crucial facts vary from one narrative to the next. From Jesus' genealogy to his attitude toward his coreligionists, to the time, place, and circumstances of his trial, the four books record conflicting versions and sentiments. The ambivalence and contradictions reflect a tension between the Jewish background and identification of Jesus on the one hand, and the Gentile milieus and antisemitism of the authors narrating the events on the other.**

**The Gospels have three currents running through them. At times Jesus' Jewish origins and allegiance are easy to perceive; often the evangelists' Gentile orientation and misinformation about Judaism are evident; and frequently the authors' audacious accusations and unconcealed animosity for Jews are manifest. All of this is woven into the image and portrayal of these Gentile writers of the New Testament in their depiction of Jews in the New Testament. It is in investigating such conflicting portrayals of Jesus and the Jew as found in the New Testament that it is hoped that a clearer picture of Jesus and the events in his life will emerge so that the myths can be separated from the facts.**

**This separation is particularly important in light of the Gospels' inconsistent and often contradictory portrayal of Jesus. Here are some paradoxes which should be borne in mind as the various currents or influences in the Gospels are discussed:**

- **Jesus was *a* Jew and wanted only to live and preach among Jews;**
  - **He considered Jews his enemies who plotted to kill him.**
- **Jesus emulated the Pharisees by quoting their parables and prayers;**

- **He constantly expressed contempt for them by calling them hypocrites.**
- **Jesus believed in and frequently quoted the Torah;**
  - **He repudiated its contents.**
- **Jesus was gentle;**
  - **He committed an unprovoked act of violence at the Temple.**
- **Jesus loved all mankind;**
  - **He reviled those who did not acknowledge him.**
- **Jesus believed his death was foreordained by God;**
  - **He attributed his death to betrayal by a disciple in league with (other) Jews.**

**In the course of our study and in future articles on this site we shall try to distinguish between the voice of Jesus and the words of the evangelists.**

**The evangelists seem to have shared the views of the apostles who preceded them. All the writers of the Gospels and Book of Acts expressed Paul's ideas that Jesus was divine and that obedience to the Torah was replaced by faith in Jesus. They furthered Paul's denunciation of the Law and slander of Jews and embroidered upon his basic message by adding stories and legends. The verses in the Gospels and Acts, like those in the Epistles, are strewn with personal insults and false accusations against Jews. These scurrilous attacks become more understandable when seen in the context of the authors' backgrounds and perspectives. To begin this examination, let us look at who were the evangelists and writers of the Gospels and Acts and why these documents were written. We will do so in the following article.**

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# WHO WERE THE EVANGELISTS AND WHY DID THEY WRITE THAT WAY?

## *All four Gospels and Acts were written and/or redacted outside of Judea in Greek by Gentiles. They were written following the Roman conquest of Judea and exile of Jews.*

**The above statement flies in the face of Gentile Church Tradition but current discoveries in archeology as well as study in textual criticism reveal the truth of such a statement. Oh by the way, the Jewish scholars today also attest to the fact that the evangelists' Gentile orientation and misinformation about Judaism are evident throughout the New Testament; especially the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. Their conclusion is simply; the authors' audacious accusations and unconcealed animosity for Jews are manifest and betray a non-Jewish hand in their writing. All of this is woven into the image and portrayal of these Gentile writers of the New Testament in their depiction of Jews in the New Testament. It is in investigating such conflicting portrayals of Jesus and the Jew as found in the New Testament that it is hoped that a clearer picture of Jesus and the events in his life will emerge so that the myths can be separated from the facts.**

**Tradition says that the Book of Mark, the earliest Gospel, was most likely written in Rome around some time after 70 C.E. during the Jewish War or after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. Mark portrayed the Jews (under the name of Pharisees) as bitter foes of Jesus. The author wanted to distance the new faith (Christianity) from the defeated and disliked enemy (Jews). He was particularly keen to do so in the capital of the Empire which had just fought and defeated the Judeans. Mark saw that defeat as punishment for defying Rome (S.G.F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem, p. 204).**

**Tradition says that the Book of Matthew was composed long after 80 C.E. in Alexandria, Egypt or in Antioch, Syria. Both cities had a history of antagonism to Jews and Judea. Matthew tried to show that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies and that they foretold the supersession of the Jews by the Gentiles. He displayed a tremendous amount of anti-Jewish sentiments in his acrimonious attacks on Jews and in the macabre imprecation he directed at them--an element which is found in no other Gospel. K. Stendahl in the introduction to the second edition of The School of St. Matthew, p. 128, stated that he was the Matthean Gospel as a "Hellenistic phenomenon" and as belonging to a predominantly Gentile community. Yet it carried a Hebrew name as it presumed author. He also included verses, which are contrary to the general message of the book, such as the inviolability of the Law and Jesus' mission being only to the Jews.**

**Tradition says that the Book of Luke was written long after 85 C.E. in Ephesus or Greece. The same author composed Acts, the earliest history of the Christian Church, which is considered a literary drama of the early Church. Luke had no sympathy for, and even less knowledge of, Jews or Judea. The Book of Luke incorporates much of the same material found in the Book of Matthew and both of them repeat much of the material in Mark's book. Luke's Gospel also shows lapses from the general tenor of the book. He notes that Pharisees warned Jesus of danger and that Jesus distributed swords to his followers.**

**Traditions says that the Book of John was composed or redacted by after 100 C.E. It may have been started in Judea and reached its later stages and final development in Ephesus, Asia Minor. The author lived at a time when Christianity had already made great inroads on his Gentile environment. He was so removed from the world in which Jesus had lived that he portrayed him as an outsider to Judaism and an enemy of the Jews whom he characterized as satanic. In this Gospel Jesus is presented as a deity.**

***What I find very disturbing is that will all the Christian writing going on since the early 90 A.D.s the FIRST QUOTE FROM A "NAMED APOSTLE AND HIS GOSPEL" appears ONLY after 180 A.D. which indicates that these writings were NON-APOSTOLIC and the work of Gentile redactors in the names of the apostles...this explains their anti-Jewish content and doctrinal differences***

***THINK!***

**Some scholars insist that Mark and Matthew were Jews despite their palpable antisemitism and the abysmal ignorance of basic Jewish laws and customs which they showed in their writings. But again this is nothing more than the influence of the Roman Catholic Gentile Church traditions speaking. Virtually all scholars agree that Luke was a Gentile. "There is a growing consensus that all three Synoptic Gospels are not only addressed to Gentile Christians but were also written by Gentiles (L. Gaston, Paul and the Torah, p. 108). Opinion is divided about John's religious origins. Some authorities recognize John as having been a Gnostic Gentile before converting to Christianity while others maintain that he was born a Jew. If you ever study Gnosticism and the Gnostic savior you will see the Gnostic influence within the Gospel of John and it's anti-Jewish Messiah for whom he really is. Although the writer of John had more knowledge of Jewish law than any of the Synoptic writers, it was still quite limited and superficial.**

## THE UNJEWISHNESS OF THE GOSPELS AND ACTS...WHO COULD MAKE THESE MISTAKES AND YET BE JEWS?

***A few examples of the evangelists' presentation of Jewish history and teachings provide grounds to doubt that any of them were originally Jews.***

**The Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, which comprise the Synoptics, record the "Lord's Supper" (Matthew and Mark) or the "Last Supper" (Luke) as having taken place at Passover. If such an event occurred at the time of the holiday, it would have been *a* highly ritualized meal called a seder or a communal sacrificial meal consumed in kinship groups and quite possibly Temple-centered. Baruch M. Bosker, in his "Was The Last Supper A Passover Seder" in Biblical Review, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer, 1987, on pp. 24-33, maintains that the "seder" was not instituted until after 70 C.E. At the time of Jesus, the Passover meal followed the animal sacrifice. It was a family or kinship gathering which celebrated the Exodus. If the family were in Jerusalem on a pilgrimage or lived there, the sacrifice would have taken place at the Temple. Otherwise, the family slaughtered it's own lamb or bullock locally where they lived. The ensuing meal was a festive celebration. While Passover may have been observed differently in Temple days than today, there are certain similarities and continuities. It was a family celebration at which matza was eaten with the meat. In either case the festive meal was a celebration of the Exodus from Egypt and liberation from bondage. This historical event is the essence of the holiday. The Passover had particular relevance to Jews then living in Judea under Roman domination and fighting for their independence. This holiday brought out patriotic and nationalistic feelings and**

a heightened sensitivity to the issue of subjugation to the Romans. Yet no mention was made at the "Last Supper" of the main point of Passover, the commemoration of the struggle for freedom in the New Testament accounts which is strange if written by a Jew and not later by Gentiles who would obviously downplay such a desire for Jewish independence. **No wonder we don't see it in the New Testament accounts of this last dinner of Jesus. These Gentile evangelists were not interested in the freedom of Judea. They weren't even interested in the emancipation of their own provinces from Roman rule.** These non-Jewish writers betray their nationality by interpreting the holiday and meal to fit their message and by totally omitting any reference to parallels with the Exodus from Egypt and the anticipated deliverance from Rome. Such omission reveal writers with Rome's interests on their minds. **Even worse John's version of the meal forms the background to the Christian liturgy and has no connection with Jewish practice whatsoever.** Although John does not specifically call it *a* seder, he inferred it by speaking of preparations for the holiday. All the components of the seder were absent. The Gospels made no reference to the most traditional food associated with Passover and mandated in the Torah: matzot. John (6:4-9) spoke of preparations for the Passover in terms of buying bread, a food which is strictly forbidden during the festival. John even referred to five loaves of barley bread. The seder is a family celebration. Not only were no family members of any of the disciples present, but even the family at whose home they celebrated Passover did not join them. There were no women or children, a highly unlikely way for Jews to commemorate this important holiday in ancient or modern times.

**Seeing the above omissions should make you wonder if a Jew wrote any of this let alone added the theological overtones to it which have more in common with Sun Worship than Judaism. The Gospels' treatment of Passover is analogous to a description of an Easter mass in which there is no mention of Jesus' death and resurrection. The evangelists were too far removed from Judaism to know the details of its celebrations or its way of life as practiced by Judaism. Their information was fragmentary and based on hearsay. Their account of the "Last Supper" sounded like *a* Hellenistic liturgical meal.**

**Answer for yourself: Besides the omission of traditional Jewish elements associated with this meal would Jesus, the would be Messiah, adopt pagan ideas at this traditional Jewish meal by saying as all the Sun-Gods and Sun-Godmen had said before him: "eat my body and drink my blood?"**

**That should rock you when the impact of what I just said hits you!**

The authors of the Gospels exhibited their ignorance of Judaism in other ways as well. Their ideas about Sabbath laws and traditions also betrayed a lack of familiarity with the religion of Jesus. Jesus' faith healing involved no infringement of Sabbath restrictions. That's right; I said "none!" **The writers of the Synoptic Gospels were aware that Saturday was a day of rest from routine work. What they did not know was that** Jesus' miracle cures did not violate Sabbath laws as defined in the Mishna and observed by the Pharisees. Jesus' healing would not have aroused their opposition as depicted in the New Testament. Such opposition is a veiled attempt to artificially separate Jesus from Judaism and the Jewish leaders of the faith from Jesus in order to make it seem as if Jesus had license to replace his faith with an new religion of Rome's making and teaching! **This is called "Replacement Religion" and such lies about Judaism are the very foundation of it!**

Nor did the Gentile evangelists realize that Jesus' disciples were permitted to pick grain on the Sabbath if they were hungry. No Jew would have made this mistake; even a ten year old Jewish child knew this yet we are taught since childhood that these accounts in the New Testament are "inspired, infallible, and inerrant" when all they actually portray is Gentile hatred for the Jews and the Gentile's desire to institute a replacement religion which Rome would ultimately be successful in doing. **These Jewish disciples of Jesus were not expected to suffer or starve, especially on that day although adequate**

**preparations for the Sabbath, as indicated in the Torah, would have precluded their need to pick grains and have such a skimpy meal (Ex. 16:22-26).**

**Still another characteristic of the Gospel writers was their persistent misquotation and misapplication of Hebrew Scriptures. This fact is demonstrated beyond any doubt on many of our ministry's websites. This is hard stuff for a Christian to handle; when he sees the purposeful forgery of his Bible which he has been taught to love since childhood. Such glaring misstatements as claiming that the Torah mandated love of neighbor and hatred of ones's enemy is evidence of how far from Judaism Matthew--"the most Jewish" of the evangelists-was removed. On this website alone I deal with the multiple purposeful misapplication of Scripture by Paul along with his purposeful misquotation and mistranslation of the Hebrew Scriptures when passing them off to unsuspecting non-Jews who were never familiar with these Jewish Hebrew Scriptures in the first place.**

## *Nothing has changed today either...as 2.5 Billion Christians don't know when reading their English Bibles which are the fraudulent passages and which are not*

**Another bit of evidence which militates against the belief that the Synopticists were Jews is "the fact that none (Mk. 12:30, Mt. 22:37, Lk. 10:27) can reproduce the Shema accurately." This is the most central and fundamental prayer in Judaism and is recited twice daily by observant Jews. The evangelists could not even quote the first two lines correctly. The Hebrew follows and then read how the New Testament writes, who are supposed to be Jews, misquote it!**

***Deut 6:4-5 4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. (KJV)***

***Mark 12:29-30 29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (KJV)***

***Matt 22:37 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (KJV)***

***Luke 10:27 27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. (KJV)***

**Contradictory statements regarding the Law which were ascribed to Jesus reflect, among other things, the confusion of the authors. They quoted him as insisting that nothing should be changed in the Torah and then they cited him as denying its laws relating to dietary restrictions, Sabbath observance, and divorce. The Gentile evangelists were echoing doctrines Paul had introduced some decades earlier which were at odds with the Judaism of Jesus. They had embraced Paul's teaching without knowing much of anything about Judaism. This is not news today either because 2.5 billion Christians follow Paul more than they follow Jesus and his teachings today. Paul has won due to Rome's clout over the ages and Jesus the Jew has lost!**

**The evangelists' confusion about Jewish law and tradition is only surpassed by their hostility to Jews. In many instances in life ignorance of a culture is accompanied by hostility to it. The evangelists, alas, were no exception. There is hardly a chapter that is free of gross insults and wild accusations.**

## *The combination of ignorance and enmity toward Judaism make it hard to*

# *believe that any of the evangelists was of Jewish origin*

**Yet this view has persisted down through the centuries. The belief that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were Jews seems to validate Christianity for many Christians and add ammunition to their proselytizing arsenal.**

**While it is assumed that the author of each Gospel is responsible for the contents of his book, it should be borne in mind that these books have passed through the hands of many Gentile scribes over the centuries who may have made multiple changes or revisions. I challenge you to read good authors like B. Ehrman and The Orthodox Corruption Of Scripture which documents such changes make by the monks as false Christology is added to the texts to "make Jesus into God." I challenge you to read this and deny such evidence exits. One only needs to read books by honest New Testament authorities that document such additions and deletions or to look at pictures of Greek New Testament manuscripts which have cursive writing besides the Greek which introduce foreign theological ideas which in later copies and revision get added to the texts and then the "Revelation of God" grows if you get my point! This is not Revelation but Gentile synthesis of Sun Worship with Judaism and out comes this Golden Calf called Gentile Christianity today which has replaced and almost destroyed the true religion and faith of Jesus...Biblical Judaism. These alterations run the gamut between purposeful introduction of Gentile Sun Worship, accidental errors in translation, personal prejudices, or religious and political pressures on the scribes to accommodate Roman theology and wishes. One only need to remember that Constantine after the Council of Nicea ordered the production of 50 Bible which he oversaw; himself a God-emperor where these false christological ideas were introduced among the manuscripts about Jesus the Jew. And all this was 60 or so years before the official canonization of the New Testament no less. It is, of course, impossible to pinpoint all that constitutes editorializing by the transcribers but we know a lot is through critical study and comparison with the Hebrew Scriptures and the religion of Jesus as it existed in the first century. Since the Gospels are accepted as they are now, however, it is necessary to discuss them in terms of their present contents regardless of authorship or glosses (false or misleading interpretations) because the vast majority of 2.5 Billion Christians in the world today accept the New Testament as if it fell from Heaven instead of belched up from the synthesis of Roman Sun Worship and a little Judaism.**

**Having opened your eyes to the inconsistencies with the authorship of much of the New Testament it is time in the forthcoming articles deal with the first five books of the Christian Scriptures and center on three diverse currents coursing through them: the Jewish, the non-Jewish, and the anti-Jewish depiction of Jesus. Shalom.**

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# HAVE WE BELIEVED IN "ANOTHER JESUS" AND NOT KNOWN IT?

**Passages in Paul (ironically) warn us to beware of those preaching *"another Jesus"*...*"...if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."***

**I say "ironically" for if you have studied with us the truth about Paul which exists outside our New Testaments then you see the humor in this "self-promoting" passage used by Paul; but that is another story for another day as we want to only focus on the Jewish Jesus vs the Non-Jewish Jesus and his portrayal in the New Testament in these articles.**

**Answer for yourself: What would be considered "another Jesus"? The Greek word used in this scripture verse is "allos" meaning different. So what we are considering is a different Jesus; not the Jesus of the Bible, but another Jesus -- an impostor.**

**Today there are worldly wise, philosophers *"vain in their imaginations"* who using the example of Jesus teach men to disobey God's commandments. They are preaching *"Another Jesus"*. Many pagan practices that have absolutely no scriptural basis have been accepted, by many believers as the worship of Christ and this sadly has replaced for the unlearned the true worship intended only for God! These practices have not only been accepted but have become commonplace in the organized church. Those who refuse to participate in these practices are considered strange. These practices, introduced gradually by false teachers, have been accepted through tradition and have absolutely no scriptural basis. We have no excuse for ignorance. We have been fairly warned:**

***"there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies."***

**We must search the Hebrew scriptures FIRST to find out the truth and then and only then read the New Testament for things that confirm what we have read and recognize those things within the New Testament than contradict Moses and the Prophets. This is the only way to discern truth in the New Testament let alone about the Jesus depicted within. The truth that the ways of the L-RD prescribed for His people have not changed, nor will they change. Activities unacceptable to the Lord 6000 years ago are still unacceptable today.**

**Jesus said speaking of the Father and not himself: *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."***

**The time has come when sound doctrine is not endured. People receive teachers who tell them what they want to hear. Things that are wrong are justified, explained away: disregarding the warning, *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for***

***sweet, and sweet for bitter!"***

**Fables and the traditions of men are substituted for the truth:** ***"After their own lusts they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables."***

## *"Christianized" pagan activities, traditional inventions of men, are not in honor of the Biblical Jesus nor God the Father*

**Answer for yourself: What Jesus do they honor?** ***"another Jesus".***

# COMPROMISE IS NOT LOVE...THUS THE NEED FOR MINISTRIES LIKE BET EMET

***Today, intolerance of compromise is considered lack of love for one another. It is just the opposite. If one really cares about someone, he should tell them the truth, whether it makes him popular or not.***

**We are told that:** ***"Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."***

**Those who are willing to stand for the truth must remember:** ***"He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. The fear of the L-RD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."***

It is very difficult to proclaim error in a way that is pleasing to those who, through the traditions of men, participate in activities never prescribed nor authorized by God. **Many teachers, who have studied the Bible and secular history, are well aware of the origin of the quote "Christianized" pagan practices which we have discussed and reveal on our many websites- yet they proclaim them to be acceptable to the Biblical Jesus: These are Teachers** ***"Whose mouths must be stopped."***

**Those concealing the truth in order to uphold the traditions of men should not be told in a pleasing way:** Pagan tradition was never authorized by the Jesus of the Bible - you are preaching ***"another Jesus".***

**Answer for yourself: Do we really love the truth? Do you really want it? Those that do will not be satisfied to remain like those, who,** ***"willingly are ignorant"*****. They will study in order to search out the truth and then respond to it.**

**The truth must be proclaimed:** ***"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"*** **.....**The Biblical Jesus

**So we have a big decision to make: discerning the "true" Jesus from the "counterfeit" Jesus as depicted in the New Testament. In order to do this we need to look into the "real" and the "counterfeit" Jesus and the doctrines placed into his mouth as well as other of his supporters for only in this way can we be assured of discerning the true historical Jesus from the fraudulent Christ of Faith and Roman Church Tradition. It is to these matters that we turn at present.**

have we believed in "another jesus" and not known it?

**Jesus said:** ***My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:.....John 10:2*** Let us make sure that we are following the "real" and not the "counterfe

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# JESUS THE JEW

**It is usually easy for a Jew to recognize a fellow Jew by his cultural ties, his religious convictions, or his national identity. In the case of Jesus his Jewishness comes through loud and clear in the Gospels notwithstanding much negations, confusion and contradictions. Despite the conflicting pictures of Jesus and Judaism, or perhaps, because of them, the essential and recurrent theme of Jesus' Jewish affiliation stands out in his actions and statements. Here are a few characteristic verses:**

- **Jesus went through Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people (Mt. 4:23).**
- **They went to Capernaum and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach (Mk. 1:21).**
- **And he kept on preaching in the synagogues of Galilee (Lk. 4:44).**
- **He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capemaum (Jn. 6:59).**

**While the Gospel writers inserted certain non- or anti-Jewish notes in these and subsequent verses, the essential element of Jesus' presence in a Jewish house of prayer on Saturday cannot be disregarded. No doubt he went to synagogue where, along with his coreligionists, he chanted prayers, sang psalms, listened to the weekly Scriptural portion, and heard its elucidation. The evangelists always described Jesus' presence in the synagogue as teacher and preacher to his fellow Jews. During Jesus' life and for about five centuries thereafter, sermons consisted of expounding on the weekly Scriptural reading or explaining the laws and customs regarding an approaching festival or holiday. A person respected for his learning was invited to discuss an appropriate topic on the Sabbath. To the extent that Jesus qualified to elaborate on the text and was recognized as an authority, he would have been a guest speaker or teacher in the synagogues. But his talks would have had to be within the framework of contemporary Jewish custom and tradition. The Gentile evangelists' concept of Jesus lecturing on the religious dogma that they espoused, called "good news" or "gospel," is inconsistent with the kind of teaching done on the Sabbath in the synagogues of his day. But you would have to know Judaism to know this. In other words in the mouth of Jesus has been inserted Gentile theology by these Gentile writers of these Gospels and epistles and Jesus is made to look as if he both espoused and believed such religious dogmas when Biblical history and Biblical Judaism reveal otherwise.**

**Another time-honored tradition which Jesus observed was making pilgrimages to the Temple. His followers continued this practice as recorded in several passages in the Book of Acts (2:46, 3:1, 5:12, 21, 42). Jesus travelled to Jerusalem from all over the country to worship at the Temple and to offer sacrifices during festivals and other occasions. All the Gospels record Jesus' repeated visits to the Temple, especially at Passover.**

**The four Gospels also attribute numerous quotations from the Tanakh to him. Until this day it is customary for Jews who are familiar with their Bible to quote pithy phrases from it. This is a very Jewish thing to do and, of course, Jesus was not immune to the national habit. Many Christians observe this practice in emulation of Jesus and are unaware of its Jewish origin.**

**In both Matthew and Luke (Chapter 4 in both books) Jesus quoted verses from Deuteronomy in the story about his temptation by the devil:**

- **Man does not live by bread alone (8:3).**
- **You shall not try the Lord (6:16).**
- **You shall fear the Lord and Him only shall you serve (6:13).**

**In Mk. 10:18 Jesus repeated half a dozen of the commandments in the Decalogue which he instructed his followers to obey.**

**Mk. 12:29 and Lk. 10:27 quoted Jesus as reciting the watchword of Israel which is found in Dt. 6:4-5, as follows:**

***Hear 0 Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.***

**Both evangelists added to the above, their own phrase, "with all your mind," and Matthew and Luke omitted the first line. These verses in Deuteronomy are the introduction to the most well-known and oft-repeated prayer in Judaism. It is called the Shema after the first word in Hebrew which means "hear." It is an important part of the Jewish liturgy. The Shema is an affirmation of the unity of God. It has been on the lips of Jews on their death bed through the ages and in the mouths of Jewish martyrs as they went to their death, from Rabbi Akiva to the victims of the Holocaust. It is no coincidence that Jesus said the words in this prayer for it is a statement of belief close to the hearts of all believing and strongly identified Jews.**

**Jesus' last words were an Aramaic translation from Psalm 22:2 recorded in Mk. 15:34 and Mt. 27:46:**

***Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachtani? (My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?)***

**This poignant question has been asked repeatedly throughout their history by Jews in times of suffering and persecution when it seemed to them that God had abandoned them. The psalm could have been composed at the time of Haman and could certainly apply to the period of the Holocaust. it is not difficult to believe that this phrase was wrung from the lips of Jews like Jesus agonizing on Roman crosses.**

**Jn. 6:31 also cited Jesus (correctly and in context) in a verse from the Torah, *"He gave them bread from heaven to eat"* (Ex. 16:4). This is a reference to the manna supplied to the Hebrews in the wilderness.**

**Jesus' loyalty to the Torah is exemplified by his declaration in Mt. 5:17-19 as follows:**

***Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill them. Until heaven and earth disappear not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen will disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.***

**This seems to be a clear and unambiguous statement of Jesus' determination to uphold the dictates and principles of the Hebrew Scriptures; it is yet another example of his loyalty to Judaism. Jesus cannot be used for an example of one starting a new religion nor rejecting his own.**

**Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount in Mt. 5:3-7:27 and Sermon on the Plain in Lk. 6:20-49, 11:2-4 include the Beatitudes, the "Golden Rule," and the "Lord's Prayer," all of which have strong Jewish components. All of these pronouncements by Jesus have their origins in the Tanakh and other Hebrew literature.**

**The Beatitudes or blessings express ideas found throughout the Hebrew Bible. Let us compare, for example, the**

**thought in Mt. 5:8 with that in Psahn 11:7:**

***Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God (Mt.) The upright shall behold His face (Psalms).***

**The Golden Rule of Judaism was first stated in Lev. 19:18 as, *"Love your neighbor as yourself."* The great sage, Hillel, paraphrased this rule into these words: "Whatever is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor; this is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary." Hillel's active public life took place between 30 B.C.E. and 10 C.E., a generation before Jesus'. The scholar's famous saying has been familiar to Jews for two millennia. That it was well known to Jesus is attested by the similarity of his statement to Hillel's. In Mt. 7:12 Jesus said, *"In everything do to others what you would have them do to you for this stuns up the Law and the Prophets."* Luke's quotation (6:31) is akin to Matthew's citation. It is obvious that the Golden Rule has its origin in Hebrew literature, Biblical and post-Biblical, with which Jesus, as a Jew, was well acquainted.**

**Many verses in Jesus' prayer are also reminiscent of post-Biblical Jewish sources. Compare the first few lines of Jesus' supplication and the Kaddish or mourners' prayer which is written and recited in Aramaic.**

***Our father in heaven hallowed by your name; Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Mt. 6:9-10).***

***Exalted and hallowed is His great name...In the world that He created according to His will. May He establish His kingdom....speedily (from the Kaddish).***

**Another example of Jesus' acquaintance with post-Biblical literature was his use of expressions found in the Talmud. One of his sayings, *"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath"* (Mk. 2:27), resembles the Talmudic maxim, "The Sabbath was handed over to you and you were not handed over to the Sabbath" (Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 85b). Many aphorisms such as the aforesaid were popular and quoted by Jews centuries before they were finally written down in the Talmud.**

**Jesus is famous for the use of his parables. These are short, simple stories usually of familiar occurrences from which a moral or religious lesson can be drawn. "It is a literary form which originated with the Pharisees." in their use of the genre, however, the Pharisees were explicit in conveying their message, for that was the purpose of using this method of teaching and writing. They wanted the people they addressed to understand. By contrast, the Synoptics, all of which attributed parables to Jesus, presented them as puzzles so that the listeners were perplexed. Again we see the artificial separation of Jesus from his religion and the people from him as portrayed by these Gentile writers.**

**The Gospel writers missed the point of the parables or wanted to show Jesus as antagonistic to Jews and unwilling for them to benefit from his teachings. By depicting him as speaking in parables, the evangelists unconsciously portrayed him as a quintessential Pharisaic Jew, for this practice was a creation and trademark of the Pharisees. As in their other characterizations of Jesus, the evangelists retained the Jewish form (attending synagogue, celebrating Passover) but distorted its Jewish content .**

**Besides his Jewish habit of using parables, Jesus also expressed the strongly held Pharisaic belief in the resurrection of the dead. This seems to have been a conviction which led to close alliances or deep rifts between groups. Jesus was definitely in the majority camp of his coreligionists.**

**There is one more episode that throws light on Jesus' Jewish association. When he sent his disciples to spread his ideas and cure sickness, he warned them not to enter any Gentile villages including those of the Samaritans. They were to go only among Jews (Mt. 10:5-6). This chauvinism sounds worthy of a zealot. Many among Jesus' disciples were zealots or revolutionaries. Whether Jesus himself was a rebel or xenophobic, is uncertain. But his admonition to his followers to confine themselves to Jews, firmly and unequivocally identifies him as a Jew.**

**Although Jesus' Judaism was often blunted and misrepresented by the Gospels, it shone through nevertheless. It permeated the Synoptics and, to a lesser extent, penetrated John's very Hellenistic Gospel. In his practices, beliefs, habits, and mode of speech, Jesus declared his Jewish affinity. All the aforesaid practices attributed to Jesus in the Gospels depict a typical, loyal, dedicated Jew: He attended synagogue on the Sabbath; he visited the Temple on various festivals and other occasions; he constantly quoted Hebrew Scriptures and acknowledged and accepted the important Pentateuchal laws; he was at home with the post- Biblical literature and culture of his day as seen in his citing phrases from Hillel and telling Pharisaic parables; and he also expressed the same belief in resurrection held by most Jews of his age. Jesus was a Jew and not a Christian.**

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# THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE PORTRAIT OF A NON-JEWISH JESUS

**We looked at a Jewish Jesus in the previous article; not let us look at a non-Jewish Jesus as also depicted in the New Testament.**

**Alongside the numerous examples of Jesus' Jewish identity there are strong non-Jewish elements in the Gospels and Acts. These are to be distinguished from anti-Jewish aspects of the books which will be dealt with in subsequent articles.**

**In several passages Jesus is presented as considering himself more important than the parents and children of his followers. Mt. 4:21-22 and Mk. 1:20 relate that among Jesus' earliest disciples were James and John, sons of Zebedee, whom Jesus summoned as they were in the midst of working with and helping their father. *"Jesus called them and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him."* Such abandonment of a father, while in the very midst of earning a livelihood, runs contrary to the Jewish principle of filial duty. From the point of view of the Fifth Commandment the sons would hardly earn a commendation. According to Jewish ethics a son's obligation to his elderly parents takes precedence over almost any other responsibility. It certainly has priority over disseminating a new ideology, especially one which ignores such a basic tenet.**

**Jesus' indifference, and even opposition, to family harmony, as expressed in Mt. 10:34, is another non-Jewish position. According to Matthew's rendition, Jesus did not speak with the voice of the turtledove. There was little love in his words. He claimed that he came to bring dissension and strife to families rather than peace and harmony. This declaration was followed in the next verse in Matthew with Jesus' demand that he come first and foremost before the families of his adherents. This thought is stated in Matthew and Luke as follows:**

***Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;* and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy *of* me (Mt. 10:37-38).**

***If anyone come to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.* And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple (Lk. 14:26-27).**

**The reference to the cross, is, of course, an anachronism. The cross became the symbol of Christianity years after Jesus' death. In his time the cross was a symbol of Roman persecution. No Jew in the first century of the Common Era in Judea would have transformed it into an idealized emblem any more than a twentieth century Jew would raise the swastika as a sign around which to rally. This and other appeals to follow the cross were incorporated into the Gospels by Gentiles. They had not the foggiest notion of the significance of the cross to the people of Judea during Jesus' life, and consequently, had even less sensitivity to**

**their feelings.**

**The call to follow Jesus, even at the cost of undermining the family and rejecting parents, children, and spouses, has a ring of fanaticism. Zealots demand that their followers give priority to their goals above those of anyone else regardless of how near and dear. The evangelists devoted their lives to the new religious movement, forgoing, in many cases, marriage, children, and family ties to parents and siblings. They imposed the same single-minded dedication and sacrifice on others. Like political and religious ideologues before and after them, they put their ambitions and values above personal relations and moral obligations. Their ideology meant more than ideals. Devotion to family, responsibilities to old and young or helpless and dependent, instincts for self-preservation--all had to go by the board. They were small sacrifices when compared to the greater glory of the religion.**

**To what extent the evangelists attributed their very non-Jewish beliefs about family relationships and duties to Jesus is difficult to assess. As a Jew immersed in the values of his people, he could not subscribe, in principle, to the expectations expressed in the above quotations. Jesus would have been keenly aware of the importance which the Torah placed on obligations to parents and to family integrity.**

**As a man,, however, he was subject to the contradictions and emotional ambivalences to which all people are. There are several passages in the Gospels which allude to the strained relations between Jesus and his family. A number of verses picture a less than loving or solicitous son and brother.**

**All synopticists tell a very similar story in almost identical words of the visit to Jesus by his mother and brothers. Let us read the verses in Mt. 12:46-49 although they are virtually the same in Mk. 3:31-35 and Lk. 8:19-21.**

***While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." He replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."***

**It is hard to find an instance of greater rejection of a person's family. No doubt that Jesus' mother and brothers had taken great pains to visit him. Travel was by donkey or on foot over hilly terrain in the Galilee. Jesus' words implied that his family either did not accept his beliefs or opposed his becoming a political and religious leader. He rebuffed them because of their opposition to him, whether because of his beliefs or activities, and claimed greater affinity for his followers. Jn. 2:4 also provided us with an example of a son who showed neither warmth nor affection. Mary and Jesus attended the same wedding in Cana in Galilee. When the wine was all consumed, Mary mentioned this fact to Jesus, probably hoping that he would come up with a solution to the problem. Eventually he did by performing a miracle. John tells us that Jesus turned water into wine. But initially Jesus' reaction to his mother's request was, *"Woman what have I to do with you?"* This is a curt, if not unfriendly, way for a person to speak to anyone, let alone his mother. The identical question was asked in 1 Kings 17:18 of Elijah by a widow who was bitter and angry at the prophet. Jesus seemed no less irritated with his mother. Family differences in religion and politics are perhaps even more ubiquitous today than in Jesus' time. Parents and siblings can only hope that their adult children and brethren will be more tolerant and accepting of them when disparate points of view develop.**

**Not surprisingly, non-Jewish practices abound in the Gospels. They are particularly striking to Jewish readers because they are so contrary to their customs and laws. One such practice, which is prohibited by the Second Commandment, is kneeling before a graven image or a person as if he were a deity. Mark (1:40, 10:17), Matthew (8:2, 17:14), and Luke (5:12-14) record several incidents of people kneeling before Jesus. It can be presumed that many, if not most, of the supplicants were Jews inasmuch as**

**Jesus preferred to preach among them, according to the synopticists. Mt. 9:18 states:** ***"A ruler of the synagogue came and knelt before him and said, 'My daughter is at the point of death. Come and put your hand on her and she will live.'"*** **Kneeling is unlikely behavior in Jews and especially improbable in a synagogue leader. Jews have a strong resistance to it and tradition against it going back to Mordecai in the Book of Esther and beyond that, to the Pentateuch. As a Jew, Jesus would have realized that genuflection before a man was both inappropriate and forbidden. If it occurred at all, he would have been obliged to discourage it, even in Gentiles. Again, the Gospel writers were describing behavior current in their religious world and projecting it onto a culture and religion with which they did not have intimate knowledge!**

**Another practice which Jewish law strictly forbids is sorcery in which the practitioner evokes spirits and demons (Lev. 20:27, Dt. 18:10-12). In the first three Gospels there are repeated stories of Jesus speaking to spirits and ordering them out of people (Mt. 8:16,31; Mk. 1:25, 7:29, 9:25; Lk. 9:42, to mention only some examples). In some cases he not only commanded the demons to leave (their victims) but even told them where to go. In Mk. 5:7-13 and in Lk. 8:28-33 he guided the demons into a herd of pigs which was conveniently feeding on a nearby hillside. The evil spirits caused epileptic fits, psychotic episodes, and other manifestations of disturbed behavior. While Jesus may have had a gift for soothing and curing people, the kind of activity ascribed to him was witchcraft and clearly pagan in nature. Belief in, and communicating with, spirits constituted another non-Jewish ingredient injected into the picture of Jesus by Gentile authors.**

**The scene of two thousand pigs grazing on the hills of Galilee or Bashan (the Golan Heights) could only be evoked by Gentile writers who were unacquainted with the topography and the mores of the region that raising pigs who were unclean animals and forbidden food to Jews would be a sin. Raising hogs in that area two millennia ago was about as practical as opening a slaughterhouse for cows today in a Hindu city in India. Besides the absence of a pork-consuming population, Galilee and Bashan would present great difficulties for the short-legged, ungainly animals to negotiate its steep, mountainous terrain.**

**Events and scenes in synagogues, as portrayed by Matthew and Mark are so bizarre that the more familiar a Jew is with synagogues and religious services, the less likely he is to recognize them in the Gospels. The evangelists had strange ideas about what constituted Sabbath synagogue services as seen by their description of demon expulsion and miracle cures taking place there. Mk. 1:39 is similar to verses found elsewhere (Mk. 1:23-25, Mt. 4:23):** ***"So he travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons."*** **In fact, Matthew even had Jesus curing the blind and lame at the Temple (21:14). The synagogue on Saturday was neither the place nor time for curing chronic ailments or driving out demons. The houses of prayer- synagogue and Temple--did not serve as the local infirmary. Mark and Matthew revealed their unfamiliarity with the nature of synagogues (and the Temple) or with the composition of their religious worship and ceremonies. Perhaps this explains, or is the foundation of, the belief of the medieval Church that the synagogue was a house of demons and the Sabbath, a celebration of witches.**

**Besides their ignorance of synagogue services and religious practices, the synopticists displayed their separation from Judaism by constantly referring to Jesus as teaching in "their" synagogues. Notice the difference between "their" and "our" as applied to these synagogues. Again these are not Jewish writers. To these Gentile evangelists who wrote these documents in Jewish names of Jesus' apostles the synagogues were alien places, no longer part of Jesus' milieu. Of course, if Jesus had distanced himself from Judaism as portrayed in these passages, he would not have gone to the synagogues to pray and would not have been welcome to speak there. John carried the picture of detachment one step further by speaking of "your law" (Jn. 8:17, 10:34, 18:31) or "their law" (15:25). Again, and most**

**importantly because the writer of the Gospel of John is the only Gospel that makes Jesus into God, the author of this Gospel betrays his Gentile heritage by not only the theology he espouses that is so foreign to Moses, the Prophets, and what Jesus believed, but by the distancing of himself from the faith of Judaism. Yet we are expected to believe this was written by a Jew! In the final edition of John, which is the current canonized one, the Torah had ceased to be the Law Jesus observed.**

**The non-Jewish characterization of Jesus culminated in the later strata of John's Gospel. By the time it was being written, Jesus had been dead about sixty to seventy years or even longer. In the Fourth Gospel Jesus was divested of his Jewish surroundings; he no longer prayed in synagogues or walked freely among his people. He lived isolated in a village bordering a desert where he saw only his disciples (11:54). According to John, Jesus had become so remote from his fellow Jews that he said,** ***"If my kingdom were of this world, my disciples would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews"*** **(18:36). In the Gospel of John the non-Jewishness of Jesus merged into anti-Jewishness. The Jews became his enemies. Jesus no longer spoke in parables but in abstractions, like a Greek philosopher, about spirit and will. His language became obscure and mystical as it took on a Hellenistic tone and heathen symbolism. The Gnostic dualism tinges this Gospel; and we saw before in a prior article Paul's unique religious synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and Judaism. The Gnostic influence was strong both in Judaism and Gentile religions in the earliest centuries of the church. It is evident in the contrasts that John made between light and darkness (l:5);16 the children of God and the devil (1:13, 8:44); spirit and flesh (3:6); and the Church and the world (17:16). Paul likewise, a Gnostic, used such imagery a lot. John also frequently used metaphors reminiscent of paganism, as in the following passage:**

**Jesus said to them,** ***"I tell you the truth, unless you eat flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. (Jn. 6:53).***

***This concept of eating the flesh or body of gods and drinking their blood is pagan to the core..it's origin is Osiris in Egypt...but again not knowing that such liturgy lines the religions of Gentile sun-worshipping nations unsuspecting Christians read it as if such statements are Divine....they are not and no Jew would say such things let alone the eve of the Passover no less which is celebration of deliverance from the paganism of Egypt (THINK)***

***Jesus sounded more like a Greek oracle from a pagan god than a Galilean Jew, which, indeed, he had ceased to be in John's Gospel (himself a Gentile writer)***

**The synopticists all record Jesus' practice of forgiving sins. He cured a paralytic who was brought to him and then cryptically told him that his sins were forgiven (Mt. 9:2, Mk. 2:5, Lk. 5:20). It seems that the evangelists attributed the paralytic's disablement to his sins and Jesus' removal of the latter brought about his physical recovery. Mark and Matthew both expressed the Pharisees' disapproval of Jesus for appropriating to himself the authority to forgive sins. In Judaism one individual does not pardon a second for a wrong done to a third. It is incumbent on the wrongdoer to seek forgiveness from the victim and to make amends to him. Even God's absolution must not be sought until the sinner first seeks pardon from the aggrieved. This ascription to Jesus of forgiving sins is non-Jewish and indeed, alien to Judaism. The negative reaction of the Pharisees is, therefore, quite understandable since only God can forgive sin; yet the projection backward of**

**later Christology where Jesus is made God by the Gentile Church is used again for artificial separation of Jesus from the Pharisees and the Pharisees from Jesus when historically Jesus was of the School of Hillel...itself a school of Pharisees.**

**Similarly foreign to Judaism were Jesus' pronouncements in his own name. When he stated a precept, he did not appeal to the authority of God but said, "I tell you." This was a break with the prophetic tradition in which the prophets spoke in the name of God. (In all the Gospels Jesus is called a prophet at some point.) The prophets always preceded exhortations with the thunderous announcement, *"Ko amar Adonai* "--"So spoke God." They never claimed to be the origin of the commands or rebukes they gave to Israel. They were careful to specify that the admonitions came from a Higher Power. The sages also-- before, during, and after Jesus-- were meticulous in presenting their decisions as coming from their understanding of God's will and in conformity with His laws. They merely tried to interpret and transmit His wishes. By portraying Jesus as changing the rules on his own say-so, these Gentile writers and evangelists once more cast him in a non-Jewish role.**

**They kept on doing this as they repeated Paul's views about divorce. The evangelists proscribed divorce except in cases of adultery and then, forbade remarriage while the divorced spouse still lived. This prohibition was attributed to Jesus although it flies in the face of his assertion that he had not come to change the Law and the fact that the Law permits divorce. Dt. 24:1 is the Biblical source for allowing divorce. In the generation before Jesus and about a century before the Synoptics were written there was a cleavage between the philosophies or schools of Hillel and Shammai. The latter wanted to permit divorce only for adultery; Hillel insisted that divorce may occur for other reasons such as incompatibility. Hillel's views prevailed in Judaism as they did in Protestantism. Shammai's interpretation never became part of Judaism; interestingly it has been incorporated into Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Judaism considers the marriage bond important but not indissoluble. In their laws pertaining to marriage and divorce the Gospels are far stricter than the Torah. Nevertheless, the New Testament criticizes the laws of the Torah as unduly severe and, therefore, impossible to observe. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, along with Paul, claimed that marriage to a divorced person constituted adultery. Here are the words of Luke which are typical of the thoughts expressed by the others evangelists (Mt. 5:32, 19:9; Mk. 10:11-12):**

***Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Lk. 16:18)***

**The doctrine that divorce is forbidden, except for the wife's unchastity, and that remarriage is sinful are concepts which never entered the Jewish mainstream. Although attributed to Jesus this view of divorce was originally articulated (in Rom. 7:1-3) by Paul and developed by his successors.**

***Rom 7:1-3 1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. (KJV)***

**Interestingly, the synoptic evangelists had Jesus condemn marriage to a divorced woman as an act of adultery and yet John (8:1-11) portrayed him as protecting a woman caught in the act of adultery and refusing to condemn her. This attitude imposes a contradiction on an inconsistency. Jesus' alleged tolerance of adultery flies in the face of Jewish and Christian tenets. The Mosaic Law demands the removal of evil from one's midst. The fact is, the Torah implicitly recognized the threat which adultery posed to family integrity and society at large. The distrust which this kind of behavior can cause affects relations between spouses and between parents and children. Weakened family bonds have a destabilizing effect on society while strong family ties enable its members to withstand incredible difficulties. The protection of an adulteress may**

**have been a commendable act of compassion, but exonerating her behavior with the excuse that no one is without sin is incorrect and devoid of common sense. There are levels of wrongdoing. Occasional surliness in a spouse may be considered a transgression, but it isn't in the same category as occasional adultery.**

**While the Johannine Jesus forgave adultery, the synopticists found divorce unpardonable. Matthew and Mark gave a strange explanation for the Torah's consent to divorce. When asked why Moses permitted divorce if it were forbidden, Jesus was quoted as saying, *"Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard but it was not this way from the beginning"* (Mt. 19:8, Mk. 10:5-6). It is not explained why God rewarded Jews with such an indulgence if they were bad. Since divorce is seen as an alternative to a difficult situation or a way out of a mistake, it would be more likely that God would withhold such a benefit from a people meriting chastisement.**

**Matthew went even further in his definition of adultery which has become the basis for many fundamentalist Christian principles. In 5:28 he expressed this view:**

***But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.***

**Together, Matthew and Paul imposed on Christianity a prudish, negative opinion of sex as something unspiritual and unlovely. It was to be avoided if one were "strong enough" or had Paul's "gift." Mt. 19:12 advised those who could accept it to become eunuchs or renounce marriage for the kingdom of heaven. This is as far from Judaism as one can get. Lifelong celibacy and virginity, to the followers of the Mosaic faith, are considered abnormal. Just look at the fruit of such disobedience to God as seen in history as well as the current condition in the Roman Catholic Church. The unmarried state is regarded with compassion at best, never with admiration. Sex is viewed as a natural, desirable, and necessary part of life. A Biblical book like Song of Songs, whose canonization was insisted upon by no less a personage than Rabbi Akiva, is frank in its sensuality and gives no quarter to prudery.**

**The Gospels' portrayal of Jesus as single and sexless evokes a sense of disharmony with a Jewish life-style in which he grew up and by which he was surrounded. Marriage and parenthood are considered mitzvot--duties and good deeds--incumbent on men. The Mishna, whose origins, if not all its precepts, precede Jesus' ministry, contains many maxims about marriage. One of the best known relates to the age of eighteen as the appropriate time for a man to take a wife. At a period in history when longevity was rare and a prolonged apprenticeship for professional training was unknown, this custom was fairly common.**

**The tradition of early marriage continued through the Middle Ages. There is a dichotomy between the picture of Jesus which emerges regarding his personal life and the Jewish world in which he lived. The least that can be said is that it was unusual for a Jewish man to reach the age of thirty unwed in a society with such a strong emphasis on marriage and the establishment of families. The depiction of Jesus may be more characteristic of the evangelists' values than of Jesus' ideals.**

**Matthew and Mark appeared to go so far as to recommend self-mutilation if that is what it takes to remain chaste. In a remarkable passage Matthew wrote:**

***If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell (18:8-9).***

**A similar thought is found in Mt. 5:29-30 and in Mk. 9:47. This type of hyperbole has an unmistakable sound of fanaticism. Matthew's advice is both contrary to sound judgment and in opposition to Pentateuchal laws which enjoin self-injury (LEV 19:28, *21:5)*. The Torah considers the body sacred; damage to the body would defile its purity. The Gospel writers were indifferent to the consequences of the draconian measures they so cavalierly**

**suggested.**

**Still another non-Jewish element in the Gospels is apparent in the way Matthew portrayed Jesus when he was asked to cure a Phoenician child. There was neither Jewish love nor Christian charity in Jesus' reluctance to treat the child and in the ignoble words he used. He referred to non-Hebrews as "dogs" and only effected the cure when the desperate mother expressed the proper faith in him and not God (Mt. 15:24-28). There is nothing in Hebrew Scriptures which could justify or serve as a precedent for this attitude or manner of speaking. According to 2 Kings 5, Elisha cured Naaman, a Syrian general, of leprosy. Jewish law and tradition from the Bible and the Talmud onward mandate the care of the sick regardless of nationality or faith. Jews have not reserved their remedies exclusively for coreligionists by denying them to others. Matthew referred to the child's mother as a Canaanite woman from the area of Tyre and Sidon. That region is Phoenicia and again shows the writer is unfamiliar with the geography of Israel; no Jew would make that error let alone God is He were behind the writing of this document.**

**The Gospels' treatment of parables infused this very Jewish mode of expression with sentiments which were alien to Jewish thinking. The Pharisees and rabbis after them told the parables in order to illustrate or clarify a moral lesson. They were meant for everyone to understand just as the Law was for all people to know and not just a select few. The writer of the Gospel of Matthew obviously did not understand the reason for the parables and had Jesus deliberately cloud the messages and bewilder the people....just the opposite of using parables so that all could understand. In Mt. 13 Jesus addressed a large crowd relating several parables whose meanings were obscure. When his disciples asked why he spoke in parables, Jesus was quoted thus:**

***Unto you is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven but to them it is not given (12:11).***

***Elsewhere he said: Not all men can receive this saying but they to whom it is given (19:11).***

**Matthew transformed the purpose of telling clear, simple tales for the edification of the general public into confusing, cryptic messages limited to the theologically elect.**

**The evangelists also infused the parables with ideas that were foreign to Jewish teachings. An example of this, which all the Synoptics related, (Mt. 19:23-24, Mk. 10:23-25, Lk. 18:24-25), was the story of the difficulties which a rich man would have to enter heaven. This is a concept at variance with the Torah. The Law was to be applied equally to rich and poor with no favoritism to either (Lev. 19:15, Dt. 16:19). A rich man was not judged a *priori* sinful before a civil court or before God's judgment seat. His wealth would neither gain him entrance to paradise nor bar the gates before him. Of course, the evangelists may have been reacting to the advantages the wealthy enjoyed under the Romans. In Hellenism wealth would often be an asset in court.**

**The non-Jewish element in the Gospels extends to translations from Hebrew as well. For a Hebrew speaker there is something almost comical in the way the common Hebrew word, *ben-adam* is misconstrued in the Gospels. It simply means a person. Literally translated, it is "son of man," which is a human being. *Ben-adam* was used all through the Hebrew Bible---from the Pentateuch (Num. 23:19) and Prophets (Isaiah 51:12, Ezekiel) to Job (25:6) and Psalms (146:3). In the book of Ezekiel the expression was used 94 times to designate the prophet. The phrase emphasized that, although Ezekiel was privileged to witness the heavenly vision of the *Merkava,* the divine throne chariot, and to be addressed by God, he was still just a mere mortal. The term was used to contrast the majesty of God, and the humanness of the prophet. This same meaning--a human being--still exists today in modern Hebrew. It is used regularly and frequently in common Hebrew parlance. "Son of man" does not mean "son of God." In the New Testament English translation the expression is rendered in capitals, viz., Son of Man as though it were a term specific to only one individual. It is entirely reasonable to assume that Jesus, like his fellow Jews, was called, or was referred to as a *ben-adam.* His Gentile "biographers" were unacquainted with the idiom of the language in which their leader spoke or was addressed.**

**Like so many words and concepts taken from the Hebrew Bible or contemporary Judean society, *ben-adam* took on a meaning far from the one it had and still has for Hebrew- speaking Jews. Here again the New Testament kept the form but changed the content. In the lexicon of the evangelists the word became imbued with divine meaning. It was a logical progression to the next step which was to use the phrase, "Son of God." Eventually, Jesus was referred to directly as a deity; the words "Son of God" and "Son of Man" alternated with divine titles of God and Lord. The attribution of divinity to Jesus, which is found in all four Gospels, was the ultimate non-Jewish element in the books. As the French Jewish historian, Jules Isaac pointed out, "The idea of divine biological sonship not only did not have currency in Jewish theology at the time of Jesus but was not even conceivable to him, so sharply did the concept clash with Judaism's rigidly monotheistic faith." The Jewish mind, steeped in the precepts of the Tanakh, cannot accept the concept of a human, born of a woman, being a deity. This is beyond Hebrew Scriptural teachings. It violates the fundamental first principle that God is purely spiritual (non-corporeal), infinite, and immortal. This doctrine created a faith different from and contrary to Judaism. This is the ultimate non-Jewish element in the first five books of the Christian Scriptures.**

**The many statements and actions attributed to Jesus in the Gospels which are foreign to Judaism sprang from the perception that Jesus was a deity. From this belief came non-Jewish elements, such as picturing Jesus as forgiving sins, proclaiming laws in his own name, communicating with evil spirits, demanding precedence over family and loved ones, and expecting obeisance by kneeling. Opposition to divorce and negative attitudes to sex and marriage were also products of the authors' Gentile philosophy which drew a non-Jewish picture of Jesus. The isolation and withdrawal of Jesus from his people were creations of the Gospels no less than the misuse of the parables. If Jesus knew the Law well enough to preach to his fellow Jews in synagogues throughout the land, he could not have subscribed to the non-Jewish practices and beliefs attributed to him.**

***Although many Jewish ideas formed the foundation of Christianity, an equal or larger number of Hellenistic, pagan concepts infiltrated it such as the virgin birth, vicarious atonement, and a divine messiah...sadly this is what you and I learned about growing up in the Christian Church...a counterfeit Jesus!***

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# HAVE YOU MISUNDERSTOOD PAUL'S MESSAGE IN THE BOOK OF GALATIANS? #1

**The Book of Galatians is frequently regarded as a pivotal book in Christianity's rejection of the Law and the Torah for non-Jewish believers today. Christians will tell you that the Book of Galatians describes the believer's freedom in Yeshua the Messiah, God's grace in providing atonement, and life under the direction of the Holy Spirit.**

**Answer for yourself: But is this really the truth that Paul was trying to convey to his audience in the first century or have we today possibly terribly misunderstood the real message of Paul in this letter?**

**Sadly, the Book of Galatians is also often portrayed as the death knell of Messianic Judaism and of any Jewish observance among believers; both Jews and Christians.**

**Answer for yourself: What is the real message of the book of Galatians?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that you have been completely misled in understanding Paul's point in Galatians because you have failed to understand the unique circumstances that prompted its writing in the first place?**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that when Paul was saying to the Gentile believers of Galatia that "your not under the Law" that he only meant "ONE LAW;" the commandment of circumcision as it was being applied by the Jews toward Gentile believers for their inclusion into the Israel of God and that he never intended the Gentile believers to believe that the commandments of the Sabbath, the Biblical Festivals, Kosher, proper observance of the Tithe, etc., did not any longer apply to them, let alone all non-Jewish believers as we have construed today?**

**We will have to investigate it closely to be sure, and you will be wonderfully surprised once finishing your study considering what you have heard preached by the majority of Pastors and teachers in the contemporary Christian churches of today.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the book of Galatians teaching the cessation and abolition of all Jewish observances among Jews as well as Gentile believers in Yeshua?**

**Some say yes, some say no. Only one group can be correct. We must investigate to be certain we don't fall into the group that erroneously teaches doctrines opposite of what Yeshua and Paul intended for us to both "know" and "do."**

**Answer for yourself: Does the book of Galatians teach the abolition of obedience to ordinances, statutes, and commandments taught both by Moses and Yeshua and intended to be taught likewise to the Gentiles in the Great Commission?**

**You must be the judge for yourself as you study.**

## *Other than the book of Revelation, the book of Galatians is the most misunderstood book in the whole of the Bible!*

**Answer for yourself: Does the book of Galatians teach that grace has replaced the need for obedience to God's Laws that were given to provide examples and patterns for Godly conduct if obeyed?**

**You must be the judge for yourself as you study.**

**These are just a few of the difficult questions we will address in the following articles.**

# NEW LIGHT UPON OLD DARKNESS....WE BENEFIT TODAY LIKE AT NO OTHER TIME IN HISTORY...IF ONLY WE WOULD LOOK

**Unfortunately, the "cessation of the Law" perspective has surfaced more regularly since the modern rise of the Messianic Jewish movement which is a movement among today's Jewish followers of Yeshua as well as Gentile followers which stresses the return to the Hebraic Roots of early Christianity. It is their intent to express themselves and their faith using the Jewish traditions and help establish Messianic synagogues and churches. Bet Emet Ministries and ministries like it are the fruit of Teshuvah (returning to God). The cause for such a return among multitudes of Christians to "THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS" is the many Biblical truths that have come to light and which have been illuminated through in-depth study of the first century faith of Yeshua by those within the Messianic movement. We are indebted to the discovery of the Deal Sea Scrolls for new illumination that makes suspect much of what we inherited as "church tradition". It is these Biblical truths which have remained hidden for centuries by traditional Christianity, which only now, in our day and time, especially since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Nag Hammadi library are being revealed to all serious seekers of truth. Because of the surfacing of new Biblical truths in our day, as stated above we benefit today by being assured of the correct interpretation of the Book of Galatians (historically, linguistically, culturally) which must be used and presented as the antidote to the errors being preached from the pulpits of our land which mistakenly lead good people away from the righteousness of God and into sin, much of which they are not aware.**

## *The cause for such a return among multitudes of Christians to "the faith once given to the saints" is the many Biblical truths that have come to light and illumination through in-depth study of the faith of the first century...especially since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Library of Egypt*

**Answer for yourself: We must come to terms with the biggest question facing the Christian in his walk with God; namely, does the Book of Galatians indeed teach that maintaining the Jewish traditions and heritage is wrong for the followers of Yeshua, both Jew and Gentile? I am totally convinced that once you study you can confidently say "no."**

**Answer for yourself: Surprisingly, contrary to what you have been erroneously taught, does the book of Galatians in fact, rightly interpreted, teach that Gentile believers ARE TO OBSERVE JEWISH ordinances such as Sabbath, New Moon, Holy Days and Sabbaths?**

# LET US BEGIN OUR SERIOUS INVESTIGATION TO ANSWER THE ABOVE QUESTIONS

**To your surprise, that is exactly what Paul is telling them as you can quickly see from Galatians chapter 4:8:**

**8 Howbeit <235> then <5119> <3303>, when ye knew <1492> (5761) not <3756> God <2316>, ye did service <1398> (5656) unto them which by nature <5449> are <5607> (5752) no <3361> gods <2316>. 9 But <1161> now <3568>, after that ye have known <1097> (5631) God <2316>, or <1161> rather <3123> are known <1097> (5685) of <5259> God <2316>, how <4459> turn ye <1994> (5719) again <3825> to <1909> the weak <772> and <2532> beggarly <4434> elements <4747>, whereunto <3739> ye desire <2309> (5719) again <3825> <509> to be in bondage <1398> (5721)? {turn ye again: or, turn ye back} {elements: or, rudiments} 10 Ye observe <3906> (5731) days <2250>, and <2532> months <3376>, and <2532> times <2540>, and <2532> years <1763>. 11 I am afraid <5399> (5736) of you <5209>, lest <3381> <4458> I have bestowed <2872> <0> upon <1519> you <5209> labour <2872> (5758) in vain <1500>.**

**Before we begin...some more questions to set the stage....**

**Answer for yourself: Have you been taught by your church that "those old Jewish rites and ceremonies" have been done away with by the death of Yeshua? Most likely you have.**

**Answer for yourself: In this book of Galatians, do we find Paul writing before or after the Yeshua's death to Gentile believers in Galatia, Asia Minor? Definitely after Yeshua's death.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul tell them that at one time they did not know God, His ways, and were ignorant of His precepts, ordinances, statutes, and commandments; therefore their religious worship was service unto "non-gods?" Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Does Paul remind them that they are no longer in ignorance of God or His ways, in fact, does Paul stress the point that "NOW" they have come to the knowledge of the True and Living God? Yes on both counts.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see Paul's emotional consternation at the fact that NOW, these Gentile believers, having since come to know God, His ways, His statutes, and His commandments, were TURNING BACK AGAIN (quote from Gal. 4:9) to those things which they had previously practiced while yet ignorant Gentiles? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see that these believing Gentiles who had come to know God's ways, rites, ordinances, commandments, Sabbaths, Festivals, etc., WERE TURNING BACK AGAIN UNTO those months and pagan days, and holidays which they had previously repented of and ceased to observe and practice since coming to faith and knowledge in the God of Israel? You should be able to see that now.**

***In other words these formerly pagan believers who observed pagan holy days had repented of such false worship once coming to the knowledge of God and His ways, but were now, falling away from Messianic Judaism and returning to pagan worship which they had before...much of which the Christian Church still observes today in their rejection of Biblical Judaism***

## LET US PLAY THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE FOR A MOMENT

**Answer for yourself: How can we be sure that those "months, days, and years" are not Jewish Festivals and Sabbaths and that Paul is rebuking Gentile believers for observing?**

**That's easy, for pagans did not of their own course celebrate Jewish Holy Days for they had their own pagan**

**holidays which they observed (like Lent, Easter, Sol Invictus as Sunday, Christmas as the Saturnalia, etc.). It would be physically impossible for these Galatian believers to have been practicing paganism and "return again" to paganism. Such an idea does grave injustice to the thoughts of Paul. If one turns again he received a new direction. Most definitely we find here that Gentile believers, having turned from prior pagan days and their perverted worship, were observing Jewish and Biblical days once that they have come to "know God and His ways." It is from these Biblical days, months, and years from which they were turning since coming to faith and knowledge in the God of Israel and going back to their previous pagan ways; and under the influence of emotionalism and false teaching found themselves returning back to the pagan holidays of their previous religious lives. To such we have Paul's admonition and rebuke. Thus we find that nowhere does the grace we receive from God absolve us of our responsibility to obey the teachings of the Apostles as we find Paul teaching Gentiles in Galatia.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you now see that Paul was teaching Gentiles to observe the Jewish Festivals, Holy Days, and Sabbaths, and it was from these Biblical injunctions that they "were turning back away from" to return AGAIN to the pagan life-style from which they had been delivered since coming to God and His ways?**

**You should.**

**Answer for yourself: Is this what is done in your church as well? When was the last time your Pastor let you in the Passover Haggadah, or Shavout, or Sukkoth, or Rosh HaShannah, or taught correctly the Sabbath? Has you church rejected the Biblical Festivals in favor of their own "traditional" church calendar inherited from Rome?**

## WHY SHOULD WE OBEY...TO BE SAVED OR BECAUSE WE ARE SAVED?

**Answer for yourself: Having seen that manifestations of the Law (such as adherence and observance of Festivals and Sabbath-Saturday) were being taught to Gentiles following the cross of Yeshua, then was Paul teaching Gentiles to obey these laws TO BE SAVED or BECAUSE THEY WERE SAVED THEY OWED THEIR OBEDIENCE TO THE ONE WHO SAVED THEM? Obedience is always our loving response to God's grace is saving us.**

**Answer for yourself: So then, if Gentiles who had faith in God thorough the ministry of Yeshua after his death were taught by Paul after the cross to observe and keep Holy Days and Jewish Days (which just so happen to be Biblical days), then dear Christian, what right do we have to attend churches which do not teach us these things, but rather substitute Roman and Greek pagan holidays which look religious because 1700 years ago early Catholic church fathers attached Yeshua's name to them?**

**We have no right and should repent immediately and learn how to observe those special appointed times with God which He gave us, and no longer observe those church holidays given to us by man. Once you see this the shame should be the greatest motivator for your repentance and return to "The Faith Once Given To The Saints".**

## BUT MY CHURCH TOLD ME THAT THE LAW WAS "AGAINST ME"...WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

**Knowing that we are saved by grace, such knowledge should not give us a license to sin by not observing the commandments of God. We, as thankful believers should desire to obey the God who gives us the free gift of eternal life and salvation. If, when reading the Bible, and especially Paul, let us never forget that the only part of the Law that was written in ordinances which was against us was the "death penalty" for our breaking of the Laws of God. It is this part of the Law, the judicial part of the Law that revealed our need for salvation, that**

**has served its purpose to motivate us and lead us to God and His salvation. That part of the Law is finished in the life of a believer as the Law has drawn him God and His Torah; for within the Torah is the blue-print for Eternal Life.**

**However, the instructive and teaching aspect of the Law still remains for non-Jewish believers today (Christians) as it did for the Galatians and Paul. To such Gentiles Paul took the Law (regarding Biblical days, months, and years) and to us he would do the same. It is a shame that Paul could say that he was "not guilty of failing to preach the whole counsel of God" when so many are guilty today. Paul taught the Law as a consequence of "being saved," thus strengthening our relationship with the God who saves us, and not as a prerequisite to being saved.**

***So for anyone that teaches or preaches that Gentile believers are NOT to observe the Law because it brings bondage and legalism (ie., the commandments, statutes, and ordinances concerning such things as Festivals, Sabbaths, Holy Days, etc.) have totally misunderstood Paul and his message in Galatians. Such views espoused by many churches conflict with the message of Paul by 180 degrees!***

## HAS CURRENT CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY CAUSED ME TO VIOLATE THE LAW AND THUS CAUSED ME TO SIN?

**Answer for yourself: Does our misunderstanding of the message of Paul cause us to sin by producing in us multitudes of conflicting denominational and non-denominational belief systems and their resulting conducts and behaviors which, more often than not, oppose the real words and message of which God commanded us to both believe and do? It sure does.**

***...to be sure we to be right with God we must interpret His word correctly... we must study from a Jewish viewpoint (REMEMBER YESHUA IS JEWISH AND WE ARE TO HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST ...THIS IS A JEWISH MIND)...***

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever thought that you could go to church and be taught to sin by being told "not to do what God has said," "by being told what God said passed away", "by being told that much of the Bible was pertinent only till the death of Yeshua and the death of Yeshua changed everything (I just showed you it didn't as Paul still was teaching much of the Law to the Gentiles AFTER Yeshua's death)," and by being told "to do, observe or practice" what God never said; in fact He said "Don't do it"?**

**Well you have if you belong to one of the 2,000 different Protestant and Catholic denominations in the world today which reject the Hebrew Roots of the early church.**

## YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION OF THIS MATERIAL IS PARAMOUNT TO YOUR "TRUE" STANDING BEFORE GOD

**To help the Christian answer these questions correctly, and to be sure we are right with God, we must interpret**

**His word correctly; we must study from a Jewish viewpoint (REMEMBER JESUS IS JEWISH AND WE ARE TO HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST ON THIS ISSUE WHICH IS A JEWISH MIND). Thus we have presented these series of articles for there is more misunderstanding concerning the Book of Galatians than any other of Paul's writing. In order for us to correctly understand this material, a brief survey of the context of the book is necessary. An important part of this context includes the Law and its relationship to grace, the Judaism of the Second Temple period, and some of the possible historical circumstances surrounding Galatians.**

# THE LAW AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO GRACE:

**The relationship of "covenant" to the Law is an important foundation for approaching the Law's relationship to grace. Tremendous similarities exist between the biblical covenant passages of the Law (e.g., Exodus 20ff. and Deuteronomy) and the ancient Hittite treaties appearing in the 13th and l4th centuries B.C. They exhibit a nearly identical structure and sequence of elements. We must examine this structure of covenants if we are to correctly arrive at an understanding of Law that reinforces the concept that the LAW IS GRACE as manifested by God through commandments that reflect our responsibility to the ONE to whom we are in covenant. Let us examine the concept that Law is really grace by examining the structure of Biblical covenants as seen below:**

- **1. Preamble, identifying the initiator of the covenant; Ex. 20:1; Dt. 1:1-5**
- **2. Historical prologue, specifying the previous relationship that existed between the covening parties: Ex. 20:2; Dt. 1:6-3:29;**
- **3. Stipulations, the obligations involved both:**
  - **a. general; Ex. 20:3-17; 22-26; Dt. 4-11; and specifically Ex. 21-23; 25-31; Lev. 1-25; Dt. 12-26**
- **4. Arrangements for:**
  - **a. placing a copy of the treaty in the sanctuary of each party's gods; Ex. 25:16; Dt. 31:9, 24-26.**
  - **b. regular public readings of the treaty; Dt. 31:10-13.**
- **5. Witnesses, invoked to witness the treaty; Dt. 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; Ex. 24:4; Dt. 31:26.**
- **6. Curses and blessings, based on fulfillment of the stipulations:**
  - **a. blessings; Lev. 26:3-8; Dt 28:1-4.**
  - **b. curses; Lev. 26:14-33; Dt. 28:15-68.**
- **7. Oath of obedience and ratifying ceremony; Ex. 24:1-11; Dt. 27; 29:10, 12.**

**Treaties such as these were called "suzerainty treaties" whereby the subject entered into an oath of loyalty and trust to a great king OUT OF GRATITUDE FOR BENEFITS ALREADY RECEIVED. Thus, the treaty (COVENANT) served as a declaration of the lordship of the king over his servant people. The PAST GENEROSITY of the king (in our case the king is God) formed the basis for gratitude and future obedience by his subjects (the people of God).**

**Answer for yourself: Do you love God (the King) because He first loves you? I hope so. That is all we are saying here, and since you do, and since God first loved us, then we have the responsibility to obey our King!**

**The historical prologue served as an encouragement and reminder of this. This "historical chronicle" and listing of the king's blessings toward his people was designed to inspire confidence and gratitude in his people and to encourage the people to keep their covenant obligations through obedience.**

**Answer for yourself: Does the Bible and its many precious promises inspire your obedience to your King and God? I hope so.**

**Thus we can see why God preserved the Bible, especially the Hebrew Scriptures (the old testament) in order to remind us of His love and protection of His people in times past, thus reinforcing our expectation that he would do the same with us. The result of such thinking on our part is culminated in our desire to obey the covenant stipulations and obligations. Let us never forget that "we love Him for He first loved us!"**

***As love initiated the relationship between God and man, so it was to permeate the whole of its continuation. Love (in response to God's goodness as seen in man's obedience to the King's commands) and gratitude (for His love and blessings when we were yet sinners) is to infect all of life and thought under the covenant with God.***

**While grace is the motivation for covenant obedience, love stands as the key to the covenant relationship. The historical prologue shows this quite clearly. It points to the gracious actions of the king prior to the covenant and in initiating it, and specifies this as the foundation of the relationship. The Bible records for us the powerful demonstration of God's love to Israel as seen in both the Exodus and the Book of Deuteronomy chapter 1:1 through Deuteronomy 8:40. This had been preceded by his love to their ancestors (Dt. 4:37; 7:7-11; 10:15). As love initiated the relationship between God and man, so it was to permeate the whole of its continuation. Love (in response to God's goodness seen in man's obedience to the King's commands) and gratitude (for His love and blessings when we were yet sinners) is to infect all of life and thought under the covenant with God. In fact, Deuteronomy 5-11 (the giving and receiving of the Covenant at Sinai with its stipulations and commandments) can be seen as an emphasis on whole-hearted love to God as we respond to Him in obedience which is the better than any sacrifice, with Deuteronomy 6:4-6 providing its classic expression of love and commitment to God...the Shema. This latter passage calls for exclusive devotion and commitment to God alone, a love expressed through the entire person. It is through this Covenant that we find a total pattern for life given by the Creator of all life, with Deuteronomy 12-25 providing the guidelines for this pattern of living (the many commandments) as we live out our relationship with God through obedience to those things He requires of us His people. These chapters of commandments provide concrete expressions of love and devotion to God and its natural consequence, love for others.**

**So, love, not law, forms the core of our relationship with God.**

**The historical pattern of the Near Eastern treaty reinforces this perception. It was not obedience to the Law which resulted in the covenant and a relationship with God. The historical pattern begins with a miraculous deliverance, the Exodus, an example of God's grace.**

**Answer for yourself: What came first...obedience on our part or the grace and love of God for His people? Grace and love initiated a covenant by which we are required to respond to this love and grace in obedience.**

**Following grace and love from God comes the "cutting" of a covenant between God and His people and a relationship is formalized, again at God's initiative. In essence, then, the covenant legally formalized an already existing relationship rather than actually establishing one.**

**So...we don't obey to be "saved"...we obey "because we already have received" salvation...this is of paramount importance in understanding Paul and his writings on the Law.....Paul was not against the Law....in context referring only to the law of circumcision as you will come to see shortly....**

***It is the commandments that provided the guidelines in maintaining the relationship and indicated what was expected of one in covenant relationship***

***with God.***

**This is nowhere better seen than in the historical prologue of such treaties. Let us examine such a historical prologue from the Covenant as seen in Ex. 6:6-8:**

**Exod 6:6-8 6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: 7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD. (KJV)**

**Only after all this--the Exodus and the formalizing of the covenant relationship--did the ordinances, commandments, and stipulations follow. It is the commandments that provided the guidelines in maintaining the relationship and indicated what was expected of one in covenant relationship with God.**

**Answer for yourself: Are we, the people of God, because of God's love for us, expected to respond to the love of God through obedience to commandments contained in our covenant? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it the commandments that provide the guidelines in maintaining the relationship which we have with God through Covenant? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Is our obedience to commandments contained in our covenant expected of us in order to maintain the proper relationship with God? Yes.**

***Our obedience to God's commandments contained in our Covenant is expected of us in order to maintain a proper relationship with God.***

**Answer for yourself: In essence, then, is it correct to view the concept of covenant as a legal formalization of an already existing relationship with God rather than actually establishing one? Yes.**

***God's Law should be viewed as a "law code" or a manifestation on God's part whereby we, as God's people, may choose and exercise a loving response to the grace of God by obedience to those things that please Him as required by our King***

**Answer for yourself: Therefore, should the Torah (Law) be viewed as a law code or a manifestation on God's part whereby we, as God's people, may choose and exercise a loving response to the grace of God by obedience to those things required by our King? Without a doubt, the Torah, 613 commandments or Law, as it is negatively called, is nothing more than a gracious opportunity given to us to show our love for God by doing the things He requires of us.**

**Some of you may not be familiar or remember this, but in fact, the Hebrew word used for the negative term "Law" means "instruction" and "teaching." Law codes existed in Moses' time and could have served as a pattern for the biblical texts. The explicit covenant formulation of Exodus and Deuteronomy stands as strong, direct evidence that this is a treaty or covenant, and not a code of law. It is a declaration of God's kingship and his gracious choice of a people for Himself.**

***A people related to God the King through Covenant were naturally to live a***

***sovereignly designated order of life as required by the King, for which they received instructions, the Torah, the Law...benefits bestowed, or a relationship entered, logically implies consequent responsibilities on the part of man toward God.***

**A people related to God the king through covenant were naturally to live a sovereignly designated order of life as required by the king, for which they received instructions, the Torah. The designated order of life was important for good communications and an orderly relationship. When a people entered into such a covenant relationship, they gratefully took on certain obligations, the instructions which served as a guide for the covenant order of life. There is a basic underlying principle here; benefits bestowed, or a relationship entered, logically implies consequent responsibilities on the part of man toward God. In other words, the Torah was not given in answer to the question, "What must I do to enter into a relationship with God (or receive salvation)?" Understanding this, let us never forget that the Torah (Hebrew Scriptures contained in commandments and ordinances) was given ONLY in answer to the question, "Now that I have this wonderful relationship with God, how can I express my gratitude and demonstrate my love to the ONE who loved me in the first place?" If only the Christian Church could understand this concept, their perspective on the Law would be totally revolutionized!**

**Answer for yourself: Does not the Hebrew word used for the negative term "Law" in all actuality mean "instruction" and "teaching" which is not negative but positive? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: As a people related to God our King through "covenant," are we expected by God to live our lives as ordered by the King? Yes.**

***When a people entered into such a covenant relationship, they gratefully took on certain obligations; the instructions which served as a guide for the covenant order of life.***

**Answer for yourself: Does it not stand to reason that if we are required to live a life as ordered by the King that he would give us the required instructions? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you coming to better understand that such "required instructions" are contained in the Torah in spite of the "brainwashing" from gross misinterpretation of the Pauline literature by the anti-Semitic Gentile Church over the centuries? I hope so.**

**The Near Eastern treaty pattern thus bears directly on one's understanding of the essence of Torah. Essentially, the great king granting the treaty says: "These are all the things I've done for you. You didn't deserve them, but I did them nevertheless. Now, because of your gratitude and love, I expect you to be faithful to me and my government. Here's how you can be faithful and demonstrate your love and loyalty; these are my guidelines." So the concept of covenant shows that all of the Torah material must be understood as the grace of God. He established the nation and the covenant relationship by grace, and he graciously provided guidelines for expressing that relationship through love and loyalty.**

**Consistent with this, there are throughout the Old Testament repeated references to God's graciousness. The very first words of "the Law" (Ex. 20:2) are a recounting of grace: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, who brought you out of slavery." As Moses chisels out the two replacement tablets of the commandments, God passes before Moses and proclaims His character, "The Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in love and faithfulness, demonstrating love to thousands and forgiving evil and sin." (Ex. 34:6-7) The Psalms speak beautifully of God's love, mercy and compassion, not man's efforts, as the basis for his forgiving sin (51:1; 25:7; 103:10-13).**

**Psalm 51:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.**

**Psalm 25:7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.**

**Psalm 103:10 (KJS) He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, [so] great is his mercy toward them that fear him. {as...: Heb. according to the height of the heaven} 12 As far as the east is from the west, [so] far hath he removed our transgressions from us. 13 Like as a father pitieth [his] children, [so] the LORD pitieth them that fear him.**

**When Paul wants to provide evidence that righteousness before God is based on a faith response to God's grace (Rom. 10:6-8), he cites Deuteronomy 30:12-14.**

**Roma 10:6 (KJS) But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down [from above]:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;**

**Deut 30:12 (KJS) It [is] not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13 Neither [is] it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14 But the word [is] very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.**

**Answer for yourself: Had you noticed before now that Paul in Romans 10:6 is quoting an Old Testament Scripture and not giving us any NEW information? I don't think that the majority of Christians were aware that much of what we have heard preached in our churches, much of which we interpreted as new and different from the Old Testament, is in actuality the same message that God has been giving mankind since the beginning!**

**At other times (Rom. 1:17; 4:3) Paul points to the Old Testament (Hab. 2:4; Gen. 15:6) as teaching that salvation and relationship with God come as a result of faith and not law-keeping alone. The Torah and the Old Testament are full of grace.**

**Roma 1:17 (KJS) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**

**Roma 4:3 (KJS) For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.**

**Haba 2:4 (KJS) Behold, his soul [which] is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.**

**Gen. 15:6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.**

## *if we have faith, we will respond in faith to the Words of God accurately by obeying properly the commandments of God*

**As you can see for yourself, the Scriptures that you have heard your whole life quoted in the Christian church, that has reinforced the erroneous idea that we are no longer under Law, but under grace come from the Old Testament which teaches we are "under" the Law. Those Scriptures in the New Testament that has led you to mistakenly believe that since Yeshua we are under grace through faith, where as before Yeshua there was no grace, is in reality Old Testament Scriptures which were never used in**

**such a manner by "holy men of old moved by the Holy Spirit".**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see that grace was always given to man, even in the Old Testament? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see that imputed righteousness has ALWAYS BEEN GIVEN TO MAN FROM GOD in response to his faith? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now begin to see for yourself that if we have faith, we will respond in faith to the Words of God accurately by obeying properly the commandments of God?**

***That means we will follow and observe the picture in the New Testament which teaches us that non-Jewish believers in God through the ministry of Yeshua kept and observed the Law and Commandments of God as they were their Covenant stipulations which determined one's relationship and standing with God***

**Let us continue with the second teaching from Galatians. Shalom.**

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# HAVE YOU MISUNDERSTOOD PAUL'S MESSAGE IN THE BOOK OF GALATIANS? #2

**The Judaism of the first century was not homogeneous. Rather, it was a rich tapestry interwoven with broad diversity of strands. Philip Sigal (The Emergence of Contemporary Judaism, vol. 1, Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1980, pp. 382-383), for example, refers to fourteen different segments: Hellenistic allegorizers; Hellenistic traditionalists; non-Hellenistic conservative traditionalists; Essenes; Therapeutae; Qumranites; Samaritans; the priestly establishment and the Sadducees; proto-rabbinic circles; am ha' aretz; tithe and purity fellowships (havurot); Hemerobaptists or morning bathers; Boethusians; and Galileans. Even within some of the groups significant variations existed, as for example, the determined debates between the Schools of Shammai and Hillel among the Pharisees. As might rightly be expected, this diversity resulted in corresponding variations in theological emphasis, a number of which Paul and the Galatians would have fit right into.**

**One of these emphases is the stressing of the fact that relationship with God has priority and precedence over observing the commandments, as for example the Talmud's teaching: "Why does the section 'Hear, O Israel' precede 'And it shall come to pass if ye hearken?--So that a man may first take upon him the yoke of the kingdom of heaven and afterwards take upon him the yoke of the commandments" (Berakot 2.2). All that this is saying, however, is that we must first hear and understand God before we can obey His wishes and will correctly. The Mechilta 98a (a body of Mishnah-like material) reinforces the Talmudic concept by reminding its readers that the Torah is a means of strengthening "an on-going mutual relationship of love between God and his people;" it (the Law-Torah) does not produce it!**

**Answer for yourself: Did God give us the Torah-Law (the Bible) to get us into covenant with Him, or was it given to help those already in covenant with Him to respond, behave, and obey in such a way that they could be pleasing to the One to Whom they were already in covenant with?**

***Whether you know it or not you just read the most important question that you will ever have to answer in life***

**The Torah was given to help us strengthen our relationship with God in which we already are in covenant with in the first place as the previous article has shown you.**

**As Sigal points out, much of modern scholarship inaccurately portrayed both first century Judaism and the relationship that exists between Judaism and Christianity. This error, he says, "is largely rooted in Christianity's misunderstanding of both Paul's and Judaism's position on faith and works.**

**Answer for yourself: Does the Christian church still suffer from this same problem today? Yes**

***Much of modern scholarship inaccurately portrays both first century Judaism and the relationship that exists between Judaism and***

## *Christianity....This grievous error..."is largely rooted in Gentile Christianity's misunderstanding of both Paul's and Judaism's position on faith and works*

**Answer for yourself: Having read the previous article on the Law, can you now say that you have learned a lot and now your perspective on the Law as having "passed away" has changed? I bet you can.**

# WAS BIBLICAL JUDAISM DEVOID OF GRACE?

**A second error has been the generally simplistic conception of Judaism as 'legalism'...having no doctrine of grace."**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see that such a concept that equates Judaism as a religion without grace is totally false and foreign to the Old Testament and the Torah? I bet you can.**

**One passage which strikingly illustrates Judaism's emphasis on grace is recited twice a week during the Tachanun portion of the daily Shacharit (morning) service, and is as follows:**

**For we do not present our supplications before thee because of our righteousness but because of thy great compassion. O Lord hear; O Lord forgive...Our father, our king, be gracious unto us and answer us, for we are lacking in good works; deal with us benevolently for thy name's sake...We know that we have sinned and there is none to stand up in our behalf...we know that we have no good works of our own; deal with us benevolently for thy name's sake. As a father has compassion on his children, so, O Lord, have compassion on us and save us for thy name's sake.**

## *Other passages stress the importance of faith for the believing Jew; of trusting God for salvation*

**For example, the following is prayed during Shacharit (morning service):**

***"Because we have trusted in thy holy, great and revered name, make us rejoice and be glad in thy salvation."* Or as the Talmud so graphically put it (Makkot 23-24): Talmud Rabbi Salmai gave the following exposition: *613 commandments were given to Moses...then came David and made them compact into 11 commandments (Psalm 15)... then came Isaiah and reduced them to six commandments (Isaiah 33:15)...then came Micah the prophet and reduced them to a compact three (Micah 6:8)...then came the prophet Habakkuk and reduced all the commandments to one, as it is written (Habakkuk 2:4): "the just shall live by faith."***

**H. J. Schoeps (The Jewish Christian Argument, New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1963, p.41) states:**

***To observe concerning this purported Jewish teaching: "Seen from a vantage point within Judaism, it is a misconception of a monstrous proportion; for all Christian polemic--and especially modern Protestant polemic against the law--misconstrues the law of the Jews as a means of attaining justification in the sight of God."***

**Answer for yourself: Contrary to what many Christians have been taught to think, have the Jewish people and their teachers NEVER considered obedience to the Laws of God as their means of justification and salvation before God?**

**No, not yesterday, today or tomorrow.**

# NOW...UNDERSTANDING THE ABOVE...WHAT IS PAUL ARGUING

# ABOUT IN GALATIANS AND WHO ARE HIS OPPONENTS?

**Answer for yourself: How then are Jews justified before God? The same way we are as Christians; "for without faith it is impossible to please God."**

**Answer for yourself: If this is so (that Jews NEVER thought that they are saved by works but faith like Christians), then one might well ask, "Who was Paul arguing against in Galatians?"**

**One thing is for sure; Paul's opponents sure was not mainstream Judaism as practiced and believed by Yeshua, for it never taught such heresy as "salvation by works", yet, more than likely, you have heard your whole life that the Jews are lost and damned to hell for they reject Yeshua and cannot obey the Law without their Temple. Such babble affirms one's total misunderstanding of the Jewish Scriptures.**

**Answer for yourself: If Paul was not writing the book of Galatians to replace Judaism with Christianity, works salvation (which we just showed you was not mainstream Judaism) with faith salvation as my church has taught me, then why did Paul write Galatians and what is its message to me today?**

**Schoeps' comment is once again pertinent:**

**"Paul may well be conducting a justifiable polemic against the erroneous opinions of "this or that scholar" among his...opponents (minority opinions). But he is not saying anything contrary to Holy Scripture (Old Testament).. Apparently then, there were those among the diversity and variety within Judaism that made up the Jewish community of the first century (and perhaps not even a majority among the Jewish people) who missed the message of the Torah, a message of covenant relationship and God's grace. They distorted it and transformed the observance of the Torah into a system of works, self-effort, and -achievement--into a means of getting right with God, or legalism. Legalism was not what mainstream Judaism taught, but apparently some significant elements within it had accepted this misunderstanding.**

# WHO WERE THESE JEWS THAT DISTORTED THE TORAH... AND WHAT WERE THEY TEACHING THAT PAUL OBJECTED TO?

**We must go the events that precipitated the Acts 15 Church Council to understand the Book of Galatians correctly. Let us examine one example as stated in Acts 15 and later refuted by James, the pastor of the Messianic church of Jerusalem.**

***15:1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, [and said], Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved (the subject was the non-Jew)***

**Apparently then, there were those Jews among the diversity and variety that made up the Jewish community of the first century (and perhaps not even a majority among the Jewish people) who missed the message of the Torah, a message of covenant relationship and God's grace as I have shown you in the previous article. This small fragment of Jews distorted the Torah and its message and transformed the observance of the Torah into a system of works, self-effort, and achievement--into a means of getting right with God, or legalism. Legalism was not what mainstream Judaism taught, but apparently significant elements within it had accepted this misunderstanding. But what you will soon see is that they distorted the message of the Torah on purpose in order to keep these "Gentile-dogs" apart from their religion. Such was the enforcement of circumcision upon the non-Jewish believers and converts in hopes that such a painful and dangerous surgical procedure on an adult male would be impetus enough to discourage**

**their conversion and fellowship among the Jewish people. We call it bigotry today. Paul knew what they overlooked on purpose in serving their selfish agenda; namely, that God had never required circumcision for the non-Jewish believer. By putting the Gentiles "under the law of circumcision" they hoped to discourage their influx into Biblical Judaism. Thus Paul's whole focus was NOT on Gentiles not being under the Law, but only not being under the Law of circumcision. Let us continue on as the picture will get clearer still.**

**Answer for yourself: If all you read was verse one of Acts 15, would it be easy for you to think that men of the religion of Yeshua (Judaism) had come down to teach the Gentiles in Antioch, Asia Minor, that circumcision is required for Gentile salvation; thus teaching OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW FOR SALVATION? It sure would and that is what many have done with the teachings of Paul; not understanding the specific nature of his opposition to the Law...the law of circumcision for the non-Jew. Many, lacking certain information and knowledge, have supposed that Paul, when saying negative things about the Law, was condemning the whole of the Law and not addressing just the parts concerning circumcision as it was applied to Gentiles. It is not my intention to deal with this matter in more detail here, but Galatians is believed by many to be of the earliest of Paul's letters that reflect his "earliest" beliefs. Later in his life however, if he really be the author of other materials that carry his name, this concept of "not being under the Law" will later evolve into grievous error as such a concept will be applied from his writings, or adulterated writings, against true Biblical faith by the Gentile Church of later history.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice in above quotes that I referred to a writer and authority in the matter of Biblical Law, and he stated that to consider that obedience was REQUIRED FOR SALVATION was a *misconception of a monstrous proportion; for all Christian polemic--and especially modern Protestant polemic against the law--misconstrues the law of the Jews as a means of attaining justification in the sight of God"?* I hope so.**

***...the letters of Paul were not, at least in his earliest theology, "to do away with the Law," but rather, "to show that obedience to the Law FOR SALVATION" was never necessary...especially that the Gentile need not obey the law of circumcision to be "right" with God since that particular commandment was not given to the non-Jew in the Covenant of Noah...only the Jews later in the Mosaic ordinances...but was only forced upon the non-Jew by fellow Jews who hated the Gentile***

**Answer for yourself: Did mainstream Judaism, as practiced by Yeshua, or Messianic Judaism in the first century teach "works salvation" (regardless of what I have been taught by those in the Gentile Church who know no better)? No.**

**Answer for yourself: Then why have we heard preached by the Christian Church our whole life that Paul's letters set us free from having to obey the Law for salvation, when the truth of the matter is that Judaism NEVER taught that themselves; but rather the opposite..that obedience to the Laws and Commandments of our Covenant demonstrated one's love for God and one's true relationship with God?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see that the letters of Paul were not "to do away with the Law," but rather, "to show that obedience to the Law of circumcision "FOR SALVATION" was never necessary, and he corrects only a small segment of misinformed Jews who had their theology wrong, for the vast majority of Jews never believed in the necessity of obeying the Law "for salvation?" I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Then "who" taught the erroneous doctrine of "works salvation" (that you have to be circumcised for salvation) for it was being taught by some? A small fraction who were mistaken in their belief system, but be not mistaken, they were in the vast "minority," and did not represent the "majority" opinion of conservative Rabbinic scholarship as we have so often been taught by Gentile Christians who do not know Judaism well. Rabbi Hillel is a good example and his school of Rabbis did not support such bigotry.**

**Acts 15:24 For as much as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, [Ye must] be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no [such] commandment**

**Answer for yourself: Did the church of Yeshua as pastored by James teach "works salvation" (that you have to be circumcised to be saved)? no.**

***Gentiles do not have to be circumcised (obey the law) to be saved; but be not mistaken; since they are saved by grace through faith, their love for the God who saves them was expected to be revealed by their obedience to the Commandments given to them in their Covenant with God BECAUSE THEY WERE ALREADY SAVED!***

**Answer for yourself: Then can you now see that the teaching of these "men from Judaea" is wrong as stated by James who is the Lord's hand-picked pastor to head up the Yeshua's church in Jerusalem? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see that even some Jews erred in their understanding of their own Law (as have many of the thousands of different Christian denominations by saying the Law was done away with since the cross when I showed you it wasn't in the last Galatian's teaching) when they were teaching that obedience (seen in the obedience to the commandment to circumcise) was NECESSARY for Gentiles to be accepted in God's kingdom? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Did this proposed "obedience to the Law" that Paul focuses upon in Galatians concern 613 Mitzvoth (commandments), or was it concerned for only one law as far as the Gentiles were concerned; namely, circumcision? Only one, for the WHOLE ISSUE of the matter is that Gentiles do not have to be circumcised (obey the Law)to be saved; but be not mistaken; since they are saved by grace through faith, their love for the God who saves them was expected to be revealed by their obedience to the commandants given to them BECAUSE THEY WERE ALREADY SAVED!**

## LET US SUMMARIZE WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU...SO FAR

**Let me stop right here and bring your attention to the fact that such laws of which I speak, the laws that Paul never intended to abolish, dictate how God desires you worship, how God desires you give your money, which days God desires you keep holy and which days you do not. The sad fact is that if you are not aware of such truths of which I speak then most likely you do not adhere to such laws and you need to be reminded that violation of the law is sin. In other words "slanted" anti-Semitic theology, which we all inherited in the Christian Church, has been responsible for years and years of sin of which you may not be aware. It is not just some simple thing when you observe Easter, which God hates, and neglect Passover. It is no small thing when you give your Tithe to the church and your Pastor uses it in areas that the Commandments do not warrant. It is no small thing that you sanctify Sunday but break the Sabbath the day before you gather to worship God week after week. These commitments are your opportunities to reveal your love for God and demonstrate your love for God before your fellow man; as well as be assured that your actions and behavior is the "loving" response toward your neighbor as dictated by the commandments of God.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that Yeshua's church gave no such commandment (that one must be circumcised (which was an act of obedience to a commandment) to be saved? I hope so. James knew that as well. Neither had mainline Judaism; it was only a small fragment which was moved by such bigotry that is responsible.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that in the Great Commission, however, the Gentiles were expressly commanded by Yeshua to be "taught to obey those things Yeshua had commanded his apostles and disciples?**

**Thus, obedience was not replaced by grace; rather, obedience is the natural response to grace. For the Christian, Bet Emet Ministries sounds an alarm for in the Christian Church today we have almost totally replaced obedience to commandments such as the Saturday Sabbath with Sunday worship, obedience to commandments concerning Holy Days and Festivals with Greco-Roman pagan days in which Yeshua's name has been attached, and the use of God's Holy Tithe has been replace by whatever agenda your particular denomination desires. God forgive us.**

***In the Great Commission, however, the Gentiles were expressly commanded by Yeshua to be "taught to obey those things which he had commanded his apostles and disciples? Thus, obedience to commandments was not replaced by grace; rather, obedience is the natural response of our love to God for His grace.***

**Answer for yourself: Does NOT being REQUIRED to obey commandments FOR SALVATION remove from us the responsibility we have as believers to "choose those things that please God" which is also manifested in Commandments? No.**

***NOT being REQUIRED to obey commandments FOR SALVATION does not remove us from the responsibility we have as believers to "choose those things that please God" which are manifested in Commandments obeyed..and not broken***

**Answer for yourself: Now let me ask you since you better understand where Paul was coming from...does not being REQUIRED to obey commandments FOR SALVATION remove from us as believers from the responsibility we have to OBEY THE COMMANDMENTS BECAUSE WE ARE SAVED BY FAITH? No.**

**Answer for yourself: Does not being REQUIRED to obey commandments FOR SALVATION remove us as believers from the responsibility we have to OBEY THE COMMANDMENTS BECAUSE WE LOVE GOD AND WE ARE EXPECTED TO EXPRESS OUR LOVE FOR GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE? No. Let us never forget Yeshua says "Why do you say you love me and not obey me?"**

**Answer for yourself: Is obedience (to the tithe, Festivals, Sabbaths) really greater than any sacrifice you can bring God? Ask Abel.**

**Answer for yourself: Does not being REQUIRED to obey commandments FOR SALVATION remove us as believers from the responsibility we have to OBEY GOD AND HIS COMMANDMENTS BECAUSE IT IS HE WHO CUT COVENANT WITH US...and our obedience strengthens our relationship with God to Whom we are already in covenant with? No, we are not removed from our responsibility to obey the Covenant making God, and responding to Him in whom we already have relationship through faith and with resultant obedience only draws us closer to God and God to us!**

# LOOK AT ACTS 15 AGAIN

**Acts 15:6 (KJS) And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men [and] brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as [he did] unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Yeshua Christ we shall be saved, even as they.**

**Answer for yourself: Did the apostles and elders come together to consider the matter as to how the Gentiles could be "saved" since they had heard, as had Paul, that men "supposedly" from the Jerusalem church were teaching that Gentiles had to be circumcised to be saved? Yes.**

***We must appeal to James' ruling as the authority to settle the matter of the Law and obedience after the death of Yeshua once for all, especially since Yeshua picked him personally to head up his new movement and church; thereby no longer accepting decisions made on the matter by the Baptists, Catholics, Charismatics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Church of Christ, 7th day Adventists, or the other 20,000 different denominations which hold differing views on the matter? I believe without a doubt that James is right, and if we disagree with him, then we are wrong and sin.***

**Answer for yourself: Was there much disputing about the matter of Law and its relationship to salvation of the Gentiles? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Is there yet today much disputing concerning the matter of Law and its relationship to the salvation of the Gentiles among the 20,000 or so different denominations? Yes there sure is.**

**Answer for yourself: Should we appeal to James' ruling for the authority to settle the matter once and for all, especially since Yeshua, our Messiah and sacrifice picked him personally to head up his new movement and church, or should we appeal to the decisions made on the matter by the conflicting doctrines and teachings as held by the Baptists, Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Church of Christ, 7th day Adventists, or the other thousands of different denominations which hold differing views on the matter? I believe without a doubt that James is right, and if we disagree with him, then we are wrong.**

**Answer for yourself: If Yeshua's church and apostolic doctrine was still being taught today (which only few do), and considering all the other movements and denominations that exist today, would you choose to identify with, fellowship with, and join the original church of Yeshua? I hope so**

**Answer for yourself: Does Peter say in verse 9 that God puts no difference between the Jew and Gentile? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: What was the "yoke" that was mistakenly put on the Gentile by a few that was not put upon the Jewish fathers which they could not bear either?**

**Simple...obedience of the commandments FOR SALVATION instead of a response of obedience seen as love for God since they were ALREADY SAVED. The Jews were never "saved" by keeping the Law.**

***"No difference" was made between the Jew and Gentile in that neither were***

## *REQUIRED TO OBEY THE LAW TO BE SAVED, but rather, both were to obey because they had already experienced God's love and forgiveness*

**Answer for yourself: In the context of Acts 15, do you see that there is "no difference" between the Jew and Gentile in that neither were REQUIRED TO OBEY TO BE SAVED, but rather, both were to obey because they had already experienced God's love and forgiveness? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Then will you reject Christian teaching that says that without Yeshua the Jew "cannot be saved for the Jew, without the Temple, cannot obey the law today for salvation" when it never was required for salvation? I hope so.**

## WHICH LAWS AMONG THE 613 WERE INTENDED FOR THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER...ACCORDING TO JAMES?

**Acts 15:19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and [from] fornication, and [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice in reading the 15th chapter of Acts that following the decision of James that in verse 28 it states that this decision (to have the Gentiles obey only that part of the Torah-the Law that was given to all mankind in Genesis...the Laws of Noah) seemed good to not only the elders of the Messianic church but to the Holy Spirit as well? Staggering thought isn't it, especially since you have been taught erroneously your whole life that the Law passed away and you are under grace. Remember that this ruling was from the first church of Yeshua!**

## *Notice that the decision of Yeshua's church to have the Gentiles obey & observe only those Laws previously given to all Gentiles in Genesis "seemed good to the Holy Spirit" and was deemed as "necessary things" for Gentile inclusion in Yeshua's church*

**Answer for yourself: Was the decision concerning which Laws were binding upon the Gentile in order for him to be included into Yeshua's Movement within Israel (the church)? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Were adherence to the laws and commandments in the Noahide Covenant perceived as "good to the Holy Spirit" and were certain laws and commandments deemed as "necessary things" or "essential things" before Gentiles could be joined to Yeshua's church? Yes on both counts.**

**Answer for yourself: Since this is after the death of Yeshua, are these things still perceived as good by the Holy Spirit and "necessary" yet today? Yes on both counts.**

**Answer for yourself: Did James command that the decision of this church council (that the Gentile did NOT have to obey the Law to be saved) be written down and distributed to all the Gentile churches, and along with this was included what laws and commandments which were considered as "minimums" which Gentiles had to adhere to in order to be joined with the Jews in the Olive Tree of Israel? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Having understood that James corrected the erroneous teaching concerning Gentiles (as well as Jews ) and how they were to be saved, can you now see that in the wake of that decision that he still commanded that the decrees made by him, the elders, and the Holy Spirit be written down, and that these**

**decrees, which were to be spread throughout all Gentile lands, INCLUDED adherence to many commandments which were deemed "NECESSARY?" I hope you did for this is of major importance to you and I as Gentile believers in Yeshua today and in his church today; regardless if you have ever heard of it or not.**

**Answer for yourself: Were these "necessary things" spoken after the death of Yeshua on the cross? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Are these "necessary things" NECESSARY today? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware what is contained in these "necessary things?" More than likely not for the Christian church does not preach obedience to the Law BECAUSE YOU ARE ALREADY SAVED, for more than likely, they preach that the Law has "passed away."**

**Acts 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;**

***Those "necessary things" were not given by James FOR GENTILE SALVATION, but seeing the work of the Holy Spirit among the Gentiles since Genesis, James and the elders saw that through Gentile obedience to these "necessary things" that the Jew and Gentile could have the middle wall of separation removed, thus allowing them to fellowship together, thereby providing a teaching atmosphere to instruct the Gentiles in the ways of God which go beyond the minimum "necessary things?" They could learn to choose other commandments which please God as well.***

**Answer for yourself: If James' decision to command Gentile to do certain "necessary things" please the Holy Spirit then, does it still please the Holy Spirit today? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Should we want to please the Holy Spirit in all we believe and do? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: As a Gentile believer in Yeshua, are we exempt from these "necessary things" today? No.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that these "necessary things" were not given by James FOR SALVATION, but seeing the work of the Holy Spirit among the Gentiles, James and the elders saw that by these "necessary things" that the Jew and Gentile could have the middle wall of separation removed, thus allowing them to fellowship together, thereby providing a teaching atmosphere to instruct the Gentile in the ways of God which go beyond the minimum "necessary things?" I hope so.**

**Acts 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you (Gentiles coming to faith in God through His Messiah) no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. 30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: 31 [Which] when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. {consolation: or, exhortation} 32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed [them].**

**Answer for yourself: Although obedience to commandments was NOT put upon the Gentiles FOR SALVATION, without a doubt was obedience to "SOME" commandments definitely laid upon the Gentile for inclusion into the church of Yeshua (grafting into Israel)? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Are they still today, and if not, what has changed since the Jerusalem Council?**

**Remember, it was after the cross that this decree was issued.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you aware that four of the commandments in Acts 15, verse 30, are 4 of the 7 categories of the Laws of Noah? You do now.**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the decision of James and the elders at the Jerusalem church council that required Gentiles to do "necessary things" was written and delivered to all other Gentiles in the known world for their study and adherence? I hope so.**

## *Has anyone ever taught you in your church these "necessary things" ...The Laws Of Noah...and helped you make sure that you are in obedience to them?*

**Answer for yourself: Did you see that the findings within the written epistle were given to the multitude of Gentiles? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Has anyone ever taught you in your church these "necessary things" and helped you make sure that you are in obedience to them? Probably not.**

**Answer for yourself: If adherence to Laws and commandments was required of Gentiles (necessary things) in order for them to belong to the church of Yeshua, then what church are you a member of today if you don't adhere to the same requirement? Surely, it may be "this or that" denomination or non-denomination, but it cannot be Yeshua's church for the requirements of Gentiles HAS NEVER CHANGED. Remember dear beloved believer, these events occurred after the cross of Messiah, and set a pattern that was adhered to by the apostles and disciples, as well as Paul, as the Great Commission went into all the known world.**

**Answer for yourself: Should we be teaching the same things that the early apostles taught, since Ephesians teaches us that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and not Baptists and Catholics? You bet!**

## *How do you reconcile what you just learned from James and Yeshua's church with Paul's statements that "we are not under Law but under grace?" Is Paul writing this...or is this being written in his name later?*

**Answer for yourself: Do you see the importance of obedience to these "necessary things" as our response of love toward the God who first loved us? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to see that we as believers should want to obey God's Law because we love God and desire to please Him? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: How do you reconcile what you just learned from James and Yeshua's church, as presented in this article, with Paul's statements that "we are not under Law but under grace?" Hard isn't it? The problem is magnified as Peter has reminded us by saying" "the writings of Paul are very hard to understand and many twist them to their own destruction." Sadly, this has happened to the majority of Christianity today.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you reconcile and properly understand "not under Law but under grace?" Remember that we are no longer under the Law as a custodian that holds us for trial and execution since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; however, we all are yet and will always be under the teaching and instructive aspects of the Law.**

**Answer for yourself: Having seen that the Law never passed away as to its teaching aspects, but only as to its**

**judicial aspects, then don't you think you should come to a better awareness and understanding about these "necessary things" as I have shown you? You bet. Don't be surprised, but you will find many things as I did in my rigorous pursuits of the truth; for example, in just one of these four "necessary things" is the commandment for Gentiles not to eat unclean foods: shellfish, catfish, shrimp, pork, etc. To do so is violation of the expressed will of God for you and your life. But you say: "that is just for the Jews." Not so, for I have shown you in-depth that these were "necessary things" for Gentiles to be a part of Yeshua's church.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you eat unclean food? How can you consider yourself a member of Yeshua's church, when you violate one of the very basic conditions required for membership after his death?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see the value of studying and returning to the Hebrew Roots of the Christian church, for much of what we have been told and allowed to do and practice is considered sin by God, and brothers and sisters, I cannot conceive that you would wish to sin once you have come to the knowledge of the truth. Thus, the reason for Bet Emet Ministries. More to follow in the second article in the series.**

**Definitely, these are things to rethink.....and then ask ourselves..."have we been taught the truth?"**

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# HAVE YOU MISUNDERSTOOD PAUL'S MESSAGE IN THE BOOK OF GALATIANS? #3

**Having previously seen two in-depth teachings concerning the Book of Galatians which has reinforced the proper understanding that we are not to "obey the Law and commandments" TO BE SAVED; but rather that we are to "obey the Law and commandments BECAUSE WE ARE SAVED, let us now strengthen our correct understanding of the book by examining the historical circumstances surrounding the Book of Galatians**

## *We should exert self-effort for GOD through obedience to the Law and commandments BECAUSE WE ALREADY ARE SAVED, NOT TO BE SAVED*

**In all probability, Paul's readers were predominantly Gentiles, located in Asia Minor in the southern part of the province of Galatia in cities he had visited on his first journey. They had responded to Paul's preaching and teaching about Yeshua and had become his followers. Apparently, Paul had been followed by a group of people now called "Judaizers" (although a more appropriate term is legalizers) who taught that the Gentile believers had to follow and obey the whole of Torah and tradition as a means of salvation and/or spirituality. This view of the Law and its relationship to Gentiles and salvation, as we saw in the last article was an incorrect interpretation by "some" Jews of their own Law. Adherence to this erroneous concept, in effect, replaced God's grace in response to one's faith in God with a system based on merit and self-effort. Again let us take not that this especially suited the purpose of bigoted Jews who wished to limit connection with "unclean" Gentiles. The Law of Circumcision suited their purpose well and this was a large deterrent from non-Jews coming to the God of Israel. Such was never Yahweh's intention. Paul was writing to combat this dangerous teaching. That brings us to the correct perspective on the issue of grace and works; namely; that we should exert self-effort FOR GOD through obedience to the Law and commandments BECAUSE WE ALREADY ARE SAVED, NOT TO BE SAVED.**

**Apparently, these legalizers claimed a connection with, and perhaps even authority from, the Jerusalem apostles, particularly James (cf. Gal. 2:6-13). Again, such was not the case however.**

**Gala 2:6 (KJS) But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed [to be somewhat] in conference added nothing to me: 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as [the gospel] of the circumcision [was] unto Peter; 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we [should go] unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. 10 Only [they would] that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do. 11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. 12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. 13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also**

**was carried away with their dissimulation.**

**But, in all likelihood, these "legalizers" and "judaizers" were self-appointed teachers who took this mission on themselves and may not have even been accurate interpreters of the Torah, let alone true followers of Yeshua as seen in Gal. 2:4: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage."**

**Answer for yourself: What was the "issue" at hand concerning the Gentiles and salvation? Simply, as we have seen, whether or not they non-Jewish believer in God had to be circumcised FOR SALVATION AND OBEY THE LAWS OF MOSES FOR SALVATION.**

**Answer for yourself: What was that "bondage" that Paul referred to? The "bondage" was the false teaching and notion that Gentiles HAD TO BE CIRCUMCISED TO BE SAVED (or obey the Law to be saved).**

**Answer for yourself: Did James, elders, and the Jerusalem Messianic Church send these men with Jerusalem authority and thereby send "legalizers" and "judaizers" with a message of bondage? No.**

## *James understood quite well that as believers in Yahweh, one is SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH, yet that faith must be an "active" and "living" faith that responds in righteous works which God deemed necessary and which are provided by Him for us in His Holy Torah*

**In Acts 15:1 we see that "certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said 'Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." This was not the message given to James by Yeshua for the world, in fact, Acts 15:24 states "For as much as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, 'Ye must be circumcised, and keep the Law: to whom we gave no such commandment.'"**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that James instructs us that NO ONE from the Messianic Community within Judaism (Yeshua's church) believed or held to such a teaching that one MUST OBEY THE LAW OR BE CIRCUMCISED TO BE SAVED." I hope so.**

**James understood quite well that as believers in Yahweh, one is SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH, yet that faith must be an "active" and "living" faith that responds in righteous works which God deemed necessary. James knew quite well that ONE OBEYS THE LAW, TEACHING, AND INSTRUCTION OF GOD BECAUSE HE IS SAVED, NEVER TO BE SAVED.**

**Some elements of their teaching did find a responsive chord in Jerusalem among the more strictly observant (cf. Acts 15:1-5).**

**Acts 15:1 (KJS) And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, [and said], Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. 3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. 4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and [of] the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command [them] to keep the law of Moses. {rose...: or, rose up, said they, certain}**

**Although the Book of Galatians' relationship to the book of Acts is a topic of much discussion, a good case can be made for Galatians being written before the Jerusalem council of Acts 15. In that case, the council decision helps to interpret the message of Galatians. The book has nothing to do with Jewish believers not observing**

**Torah and tradition; the implication of the council decision is that they will follow their heritage and customs (Acts 15: 16f.).**

## *21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.*

**Acts 15:16 (KJS) After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and [from] fornication, and [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Acts 15 written after the death of Yeshua? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Did James expect that God would see to it that the tabernacle of David, which had fallen down, would be built again? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Are the Gentiles to be included in the multitudes of people who will seek after the Lord in the restored Tabernacle of David? Yes.**

## AS MOSES WAS READ IN THE SYNAGOGUES ... AND NOT PAUL

**In fact, verse 21 is indicating that the witness provided by the Jewish believers maintaining their heritage and observing Torah is beneficial in educating these new Gentile followers in Yeshua in the statutes and ordinances of his religion; namely Jewish traditions and a Jewish faith.**

**21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.**

**Answer for yourself: Does James' statement, which seemed good to him, the elders, and the Holy Spirit, concerning what was necessary for the Gentile's inclusion within the Yeshua Messianic Movement, include Gentile introduction to the teachings of Moses and the Law of Moses as was taught weekly in the Synagogues? It sure does.**

**Let me add a little for your understanding.**

## *At the time when James spoke, the Judaism of Israel required circumcision for all non-Jews who wanted to convert to Judaism and Sinai Faith. It would be only in the Messianic Community of Yeshua where the non-Jew could find total acceptance into the Israel of God without circumcision.*

**Answer for yourself: After the death of Yeshua and the cross what was the focus of the teachings in synagogues where the Gentiles were expected to go after coming to faith in God.....Christian theology or Old Testament teachings as found in the writings of Moses?**

**Without a doubt those coming to faith in God were instructed in the Law of Moses and not Christian theology as seen by James' quote some 20 years following the death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua. That means that the earliest followers of Yeshua met in the synagogues and learned the Torah and not "Pauline theology" as we grew up hearing. This means they did not hear of the replacement of the Biblical Festivals with pagan holidays**

**to which Yeshua's name was attached, they did not hear of false atonements connected with Yeshua's death, they did not hear of the substitution of Sunday for the Sabbath, they did not hear of using the Tithe for any purpose other than what God commanded, they did not hear idolatry taught in their assemblies in which Yeshua was presented as God as we have, etc.**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it strange that the assemblies of believers, as sanctioned by the head of Yeshua's church, were not teaching "Yeshua" but "Moses?" I bet you are.**

**Answer for yourself: Does you church teach you the Law of Moses as did Yeshua's church after the cross? Probably not.**

***Does you church teach you the Law of Moses as did Yeshua's church after the cross?***

## YESHUA'S CHURCH WAS ZEALOUS FOR WHAT I HAVE BEEN TAUGHT "KILLS"...HOW COME?

**Acts 21:20-26 appears crucial to understanding James' perspective of the council decision and Paul's outlook in Galatians.**

***Since the Law had not passed away for the church Yeshua founded and his hand-picked Pastor, then why have we been taught that the Law has "passed away" by multitudes of Gentile preachers and teachers who obviously teach other-wise than James and the Apostolic church as well as Paul?***

**Acts 21:20 (KJS) And when they heard [it], they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that almost 30 years after Yeshua's death, which Christianity looks to as the causitive event for the cessation of the Law, that those in Yeshua's church who "believe" (implied...in Yeshua as the Messiah) was still zealous for the Law! I bet you never did and this should have staggering consequences upon you and your belief system, for almost certainly, the majority of you have attended churches that taught you the Law passed away with Yeshua's death.**

## GUESS WHAT? THE LAW DID NOT END...EVEN IF YOUR CHURCH SAYS SO

**Guess what? It didn't as you just read. We have been wrong and out lawless behaviors, when they deviated from the Law and commandments of God are called "sin". That means when your church uses your Tithe in areas not allowed by God, you are an "accessory" to robbing God for the Law specifically commands where the money is to be used and does not allow such liberties taken by the vast majority of Christian Churches today. That means when you sanctify and make "holy" your Church's holidays at the exclusion of God's Holy Days then you have sinned! That means when you assemble on Sunday and not on Saturday...you break the Sabbath and sin. The implications in light of Christian theology and its multitude of errors is staggering!**

**Answer for yourself: Is your church zealous for the same things which the church of Yeshua was zealous for? If you attend a typical Christian church your honest answer is probably not.**

**Answer for yourself: Did the Law "pass away" for believers in Yeshua's home church? No. They why should it**

**pass away in yours?**

**Answer for yourself: Then why have we been taught that the Law has "passed away" by multitudes of Gentile preachers and teachers who obviously teach otherwise than James and the Apostolic church? That is a good question.**

**Answer for yourself: Does the Bible teach us that the church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets and not Charismatic Tele-evangelists, Baptists, Catholics, etc.? Yes, it sure does, and since we as believers are to have our belief system built upon the faith and doctrines of the Apostles and Prophets, then how can we justify our stance believing the Law has passed away when it is blatantly obvious to the careful reader it never did?**

**Answer for yourself: According to the Jerusalem church council in Acts 15 where "necessary things" were imposed upon Gentiles who are turning to God to be part of the Yeshua Messianic Movement along with those things that they would learn as Moses is preached and taught in the synagogue every Sabbath, would Paul be a good witness TO THE GENTILES of the council's decision which seemed good to the Holy Spirit, James and the elders, if he were to teach the abolition and cessation of such Laws? No, he would be a false teacher worthy of death according to the Law.**

# PAUL GETS IN TROUBLE AND IS CALLED ON THE CARPET BY JAMES...THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL CHANGES OVER TIME....BUT GOD DOES NOT

**Acts 21:21 (KJS) And <1161> they are informed <2727> (5681) of <4012> thee <4675>, that <3754> thou teachest <1321> (5719) all <3956> the Jews <2453> which are among <2596> the Gentiles <1484> to <575> forsake <646> Moses <3475>, saying <3004> (5723) that they ought <4059> <0> not <3361> to circumcise <4059> (5721) [their] children <5043>, neither <3366> to walk <4043> (5721) after the customs <1485>. 22 What <5101> is it <2076> (5748) therefore <3767>? the multitude <4128> must <1163> (5748) needs <3843> come together <4905> (5629): for <1063> they will hear <191> (5695) that <3754> thou art come <2064> (5754). 23 Do <4160> (5657) therefore <3767> this <5124> that <3739> we say <3004> (5719) to thee <4671>: We <2254> have <1526> (5748) four <5064> men <435> which have <2171> a vow <2192> (5723) on <1909> them <1438>; 24 Them <5128> take <3880> (5631), and purify thyself <48> (5682) with <4862> them <846>, and <2532> be at charges <1159> (5657) with <1909> them <846>, that <2443> they may shave <3587> (5667) [their] heads <2776>: and <2532> all <3956> may know <1097> (5632) that those things <3754>, whereof <3739> they were informed <2727> (5769) concerning <4012> thee <4675>, are <2076> (5748) nothing <3762>; but <235> [that] thou thyself <846> also <2532> walkest orderly <4748> (5719), and keepest <5442> (5723) the law <3551>. 25 As <1161> touching <4012> the Gentiles <1484> which believe <4100> (5761), we <2249> have written <1989> (5656) [and] concluded <2919> (5660) that they <846> observe <5083> (5721) no <3367> such thing <5108>, save only <1508> that they keep <5442> (5733) themselves <846> from <5037> [things] offered to idols <1494>, and <2532> from blood <129>, and <2532> from strangled <4156>, and <2532> from fornication <4202>. 26 Then <5119> Paul <3972> took <3880> (5631) the men <435>, and the next <2192> (5746) day <2250> purifying himself <48> (5685) with <4862> them <846> entered <1524> (5715) into <1519> the temple <2411>, to signify <1229> (5723) the accomplishment <1604> of the days <2250> of purification <49>, until <2193> that <3739> an offering <4376> should be offered <4374> (5681) for <5228> every <1538> one <1520> of them <846>.**

**Answer for yourself: Was the accusation made against Paul that he was teaching the Jews to forsake Moses, to quit circumcising their children, and to stop obeying the traditions of the Law of Moses? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: In order to ascertain the truth, is James going to give Paul a test to visibly demonstrate his submission to the Law of Moses as the authority for his faith and practice? Yes**

**Answer for yourself: Is James' challenge to Paul intended to prove his obedience to the Law of Moses after the cross and the death of Yeshua; thus proving that the death of Yeshua did not negate or abrogate the Torah for the Jews or for non-Jews as well? Yes.**

**Now...let us examine the text from above...**

**The Greek word for "forsake" from Acts 21 is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 646 apostasia {ap-os-tas-ee'-ah} feminine of the same as 647; TDNT - 1:513,88; AV - to forsake + 575 1, falling away 1; 2**

**1) a falling away, defection, apostasy**

## *We are guilty as Christians of apostasy and falling away from God to the degree we reject and neglect the Law and customs of Moses*

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul accused by opponents of Yeshua's church of teaching others to fall away from God into apostasy by teaching Jews and Gentiles to forsake the Laws and customs of Moses and by teaching them to cease to obey them? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Have YOU fallen away from God into apostasy because you have been taught by Gentile Pastors and teachers to forsake the Laws and customs of Moses by ceasing to observe such Laws as the Sabbath, the Festivals of the Lord, and the correct administration of God's Holy Tithe? I hate to tell you dear brothers and sisters, but the answer to that question is resoundingly "yes, you have apostatized" if you ascribe to Sunday instead of Saturday as the Sabbath, if you observe such pagan festivals such as Easter instead of the Passover, Christmas to the neglect of Tabernacles, and if you give the Tithe to your church to administer thinking they will be "good stewards" when in reality very few Christian Churches place the Tithe in those places Yahweh has placed His name as the Bible commands.**

**Answer for yourself: Are we guilty as Christians of apostasy and falling away from God to the degree we reject and neglect the Law and customs of Moses? Yes.**

**The Greek word for "walk" is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 4043 4043 peripateo {per-ee-pat-eh'-o} from 4012 and 3961; TDNT - 5:940,804; v AV - walk 93, go 1, walk about 1, be occupied 1; 96**

- 1) to walk
  - 1a) to make one's way, progress; to make due use of opportunities
  - 1b) Hebrew for, to live
  - 1b1) to regulate one's life
  - 1b2) to conduct one's self
  - 1b3) to pass one's life

**Answer for yourself: Are we guilty of apostasy as Christians if we regulate our lives, or influence others, to reject, neglect, or cease obedience to the Laws and customs of the Mosaic Covenant? Yes, if you listen well to what Acts and James records for us.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that the church of Yeshua, after the cross, through James the head pastor and the Lord's brother, taught just the opposite of the accusations made against Paul (that he did away with the Law)? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that the church of Yeshua, after the cross, through James the head pastor and**

**the Lord's brother, taught just that the Gentiles were to pass one's life in loyal submission and obedience to the Laws of Moses and Mosaic customs? Yes, I hope so (let us remember that we obey these Laws because we are saved…not to be saved!).**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see that the first Christian Church taught obedience to the Law of Moses, his customs and rites not only to Jews, but through Jewish witness was to come the fulfillment of the Great Commission whereby all the Gentiles in all nations would by example be taught to observe all those things Yeshua commanded his disciples (the Torah)? I hope so!**

***The first Christian Church taught obedience to the Law of Moses, the Torah, its customs and rites not only to Jews, but through Jewish witness was to come the fulfillment of the Great Commission whereby all the Gentiles in all nations would, by example, be taught to observe all those things Yeshua both taught and modeled for his disciples from the Law***

**Lexicon Greek 1485**

**1485 ethos {eth'-os}from 1486; TDNT - 2:372,202; n n AV - custom 7, manner 4, be wont 1; 12**

- **1) custom**
- **2) usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite**

**Answer for yourself: Is rejecting the Law of Moses also the rejection of rites and ceremonies and Festivals since they are part of the Law? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that the test for Paul was for him to take men, buy their sacrifices, and purify himself with them, shave his head as well as theirs (ending the Nazarite vow) that all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee (that you teach that the Law has passed away since the cross) is nothing; but [that] thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul continue to follow the Law after the death of Yeshua? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Now for a tremendous question. Are you aware that the vow and the sacrifices Paul was offering in obedience to James' command included blood offerings and sin offerings...and all this over 25 years after Yeshua's death which Christian theology today says was the final sacrifice for sin (death of Yeshua)?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you think Paul would agree with the theology preached in his name today?**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles to keep the Law? Yes, in that he took in writing the decision of the church council, that these "necessary" things must be done in order to demonstrate that they had turned from idols and could only then be accepted into fellowship with the church Yeshua was building? Yes he did.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate that he walked (regulated his life, passed one life, and conducted one life) orderly by keeping the Law after the cross? Yes.**

## CAN ONE ATTAIN A STATE OF APPROVAL BEFORE GOD BY FOLLOWING THE LAWS AND COMMANDMENTS....IN SPITE OF WHAT THE GENTILE CHURCH TEACHES CONCERNING YESHUA'S DEATH?

**Referring to the above passage in Acts 21 written well after Yeshua's death....**

**The Greek word for "law" is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 3551 3551 nomos {nom'-os}from a primary nemo (to parcel out, especially food or grazing to animals); TDNT - 4:1022,646; n m AV - law 197; 197**

- **1)** ***anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command***
- **1a)** ***of any law whatsoever***
  - ***1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of God***
  - ***1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of God***
  - ***1a2) a precept or injunction***
  - ***1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason***
- **1b)** ***of the Mosaic law, and referring to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents (and remember if you are a Gentile that within the Laws of Moses we find the same Laws given earlier in the Covenant of Noah for all mankind long before there were any "Jews")***
- ***1c) the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch), is put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate that he was obedient to the rules and laws which produce a state of approval before God both before and after the cross? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: How did Paul produce, in the context of Acts 21 written after Yeshua's death, a state of being "approved of God"? He brought blood sacrifices and sin offerings. Paul knew what we don't today...that Yeshua's death was not an ultimate atonement for all as it would become in the thinking of others much later in the Gentile Church as they misinterpreted the writings of Paul.**

***Are you shocked to know that Paul continued to bring blood sacrifices after the cross? Evidently he did not ascribe to Jesus' death what we have been taught...neiteher did James or the Jerusalem Church? Why not? Well you need to study to find out when and how and by whom "atonement" was later connected to Jesus' death...you will be surprised...that is why Judaism does not accept this today...nor should we!***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate through a Nazarite blood sacrifice (Num. 6) that he was obedient to the rules and laws of the Pentateuch and the Mosaic Law, thereby producing a state of approval before God after the cross? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul bring a blood sacrifice after the cross? Yes. (See Num. 6)**

**Let us now examine the word "offering" as used of the type of sacrifice Paul is recorded of making in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow in Acts 21:26.**

**The Greek word for "offering" is as follows:**

**Lexicon Greek 4376 4376 prosphora {pros-for-ah'} from 4374; TDNT - 9:68,1252; n f AV - offering 8, offering up 1; 9**

- **1) the act of offering, a bringing to**
- **2) that which is offered, a gift, a present. In the NT a sacrifice, whether bloody or not: offering for sin,**

**expiatory offering**

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this offering could be bloody or not? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: How do we come to the correct understanding since this occurs after the cross? See numbers 6.**

**Since this is a Nazarite vow, we must look at the commandments surrounding the Nazarite vow and these are recorded for us in Numbers chapter 6:**

**Numb 6:13 (KJS) And this [is] the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings, 15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings. 16 And the priest shall bring [them] before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering: 17 And he shall offer the ram [for] a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering. 18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put [it] in the fire which [is] under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. 19 And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put [them] upon the hands of the Nazarite, after [the hair of] his separation is shaven: 20 And the priest shall wave them [for] a wave offering before the LORD: this [is] holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21 This [is] the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, [and of] his offering unto the LORD for his separation, beside that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.**

**Answer for yourself: Having read Numbers 6, do you see that blood sacrifices had to be brought in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow which Paul was obedient to after the cross? I hope so.**

***Why would Paul bring "blood sacrifices" if the Law had been done away with by Yeshua's death? He most assuredly would not have brought such sin offerings if he knew Yeshua's death was a fulfillment of prophecy as a final atonement...don't you think?***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate that he was obedient to the rules and laws which produce a state of approval before God after the cross by bringing a blood sacrifice, thus obeying the Law of Moses after the cross? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Why would Paul bring "blood sacrifices" if the Law had been down away with in Yeshua's sacrifice? He most assuredly would not have done so. The fact that he does bring blood sacrifices COMMANDED BY THE LAW testifies to him and should to us that the Law had not passed away after Yeshua's death and that the Law remains today a pattern for life and conduct for believers in God through Yeshua's ministry.**

**Answer for yourself: Dear Christian, can you now see that the Law had never passed away after the cross and we have severely misunderstood the message of Galatians in believing it has? I hope so.**

# WHY DO YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME AND NOT OBEY ME?

**Answer for yourself: Can you begin to guess at the staggering consequences facing you since the Law has not passed away, and as Christians, we have lived most of our lives as "Lawless Believes," and every man or denomination has done, for the most part, what seemed right in his own eyes?**

**It is almost too scary to consider the many sins we have committed "under grace" without the guidance of God's Law which would have regulated our conduct and behavior if followed.**

***Bet Emet Ministries continues to warn the Christian concerning the Law and its demands made upon one's worship of God through the correct giving of the Tithe, as well as the sanctification and observance of the many appointed times with God as commanded in the Law concerning His Festivals and Saturday Sabbaths. We must repent if we truly are believers in God and love Him more than our erroneous traditions.***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul have three missionary journeys to Gentiles all over the world in fulfillment of the Great Commission in which he obeyed Yeshua's command: "teach them to observe all things which I commanded you?" Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul teaching the Gentiles "to observe things commanded" or just "faith" in Christ?**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul guilty to teaching Jews and Gentiles not to observe the Law of Moses or were these charges just lies said against him? It is not my purpose in this article to expound in detail on the above question as I do so later in my website, however, you need to know that there was "some" truth to the charges leveled against Paul and as reiterated by James. Thus, the need for the test of Paul's faithfulness to the Law and the Torah. It can be shown that Paul relaxed the Law to non-Jews as well as Jewish believers when in Asia Minor during his ministry.**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul guilty to teaching Jews and Gentiles not to follow the customs of Moses? For the most part, no; however, understand that there were parts of the Torah (kosher, for instance) where Paul can be found teaching in direct conflict with the Torah. Paul would teach the Sabbath and the Festivals to the non-Jewish believers along with the ethical commands of Hebrew Scripture, however, he would relax the kosher requirements along with nullifying one's "accepted state of acceptance before God" through faithfulness in keeping the Law. He would replace such "acceptance" connected with obedience to the Torah with his own which was blended with "pagan mystery religions and their emphasis upon the blood of their gods for redemption." This is a little much to get into here, but elsewhere on the website these issues are dealt with in detail. The irony of Acts 21 is that Paul is required to do something in response to James which he had taught against to the non-Jews in Asia. Now, back to our study in Galatians.**

**Answer for yourself: Were "some" of these "charges" made by the Judaizers (that Paul was teaching against the Law) to limit Paul's influence, since he was not teaching OBEDIENCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS FOR SALVATION as they were (the men reported to have come from James, remember?)? Yes, I think you can see that now very clearly. However, we must look beyond the "circumcision" question to the problem of Paul teaching against the Law to the non-Jews and Jews in Asia. But our emphasis in Galatians deals with the circumcision question for the most part. The other problem is addressed in his other writings.**

**Acts 21:22-23 states: "What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee."**

**Answer for yourself: Can you see the importance of unity as stressed by James, and what does that say to us today when we have thousands of conflicting and contradicting different Christian denominations with multitudes of conflicting doctrines that prevents such unity? What happened to the "one Faith" of Ephesians**

**4:5 in light of thousands of competing variations of that "one" faith that exists today? Has every man become a "light unto himself?"**

**Answer for yourself: Was Paul in submission to the authority of James and the Jerusalem elders and did he respond affirmatively by preparing to bring blood sacrifices and sin offerings as James instructed ....all after Yeshua's death? Yes.**

***If Yeshua commanded his apostles and disciples to teach the Gentiles to OBSERVE those things COMMANDED by him, and if James REITERATES these COMMANDMENTS in Acts 15 before they are written and taken to all the known Gentile world..then WHO CHANGED THE MESSAGE and led us to believe, as we do today, that we are not under God's Laws?***

**Answer for yourself: Should we also be in submission to the authority of James and the Jerusalem church since it was the missionary church from which the revelation of Yeshua emanated? We sure should**

**James in Acts 21:25 reiterates the same decision made in the council of Acts 15. I want you to notice that nothing had changed: "As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written [and] concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from [things] offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication." These were the "necessary things" (Acts 15:28) REQUIRED of all Gentiles for their inclusion into the early church, thus becoming grafted into Israel.**

**Let us summarize: Here, upon Paul's arrival in Jerusalem, James converses with him about a problem. There was a rumor that Paul had ceased to follow the traditions and taught his Jewish disciples to do the same. It was these Jewish disciples that were to be lights for the Gentiles to follow in faith and practice, and I am sure you see by now, that if Paul had been teaching the Jews to reject Moses and the Law that would have been disastrous for the Messianic movement. James suggests some steps to counter this invalid accusation. Paul should take several men who had made a Nazarite vow, go to the Temple, join in their purification rites, and pay their expenses. In this way he would demonstrate his commitment to and consistency with Torah and the Jewish Biblical traditions. Paul follows James' advice, and on several later occasions expresses his own unwavering commitment to his heritage and its observance (Acts 23:1,6; 25:8; 26:5; 28:17).**

**Acts 23:1 And <1161> Paul <3972>, earnestly beholding <816> (5660) the council <4892>, said <2036> (5627), Men <435> [and] brethren <80>, I <1473> have lived <4176> (5769) in all <3956> good <18> conscience <4893> before God <2316> until <891> this <5026> day <2250>.**

**Acts 23:6 But <1161> when Paul <3972> perceived <1097> (5631) that <3754> the one <1520> part <3313> were <2076> (5748) Sadducees <4523>, and <1161> the other <2087> Pharisees <5330>, he cried out <2896> (5656) in <1722> the council <4892>, Men <435> [and] brethren <80>, I <1473> am <1510> (5748) a Pharisee <5330>, the son <5207> of a Pharisee <5330>: of <4012> the hope <1680> and <2532> resurrection <386> of the dead <3498> I <1473> am called in question <2919> (5743).**

**Acts 25:8 While he answered <626> (5740) for himself <846>, Neither <3754> <3777> against <1519> the law <3551> of the Jews <2453>, neither <3777> against <1519> the temple <2411>, nor yet <3777> against <1519> Caesar <2541>, have I offended <264> (5627) any thing at all <5100>.**

**Let us examine "have I offended" in the Greek language:**

***According to the inspired definition for the word "Law," it is the observance***

## *of the "Law" that produces a state of approval before God...for faith without "works" (obedience) is dead!*

**Lexicon Greek 264**

**264 hamartano {ham-ar-tan'-o} perhaps from 1 (as a negative particle) and the base of 3313; TDNT - 1:267,44; v AV - sin 38, trespass 3, offend 1, for your faults 1; 43**

- **1) to be without a share in**
- **2) to miss the mark**
- **3) to err, be mistaken**
- **4) to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong**
- **5) to wander from the law of God, violate God's law, sin**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul say that he *had never been mistaken or wandered from the Laws of God?* Yes. I would like to believe this but the accusation of the Jerusalem Church brings doubt; but let us continue.**

**The Greek word for "Law":**

**Lexicon Greek 3551 3551 nomos {nom'-os}from a primary nemo (to parcel out, especially food or grazing to animals); TDNT - 4:1022,646; n m AV - law 197; 197**

- **1) anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command**
- **1a) of any law whatsoever**
- **1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of God**
- **1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of God**
- **1a2) a precept or injunction**
- **1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason**
- **1b) of the Mosaic law, and referring, acc. to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents**
- **1c) the Christian religion: the law demanding faith, the moral instruction given by Christ, esp. the precept concerning love (as manifested in observance of the commandments)**
- **1d) the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch), is put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT.**

***Does good intentions or erroneous obedience please God? Or does our love for God expressed in obedience to what He has commanded?***

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul say that he had never, in his opinion, been mistaken regarding any law whatsoever, or regarding a commandment or rule producing a state of approval of God (to the best of his ability)? Yes. Again we have problem that may not have an answer. Paul taught the Torah, rescinded some of it, but his writings or the writings attributed to him in the New Testament promote a complete "denial" of the Torah for right standing and "acceptances" before God; especially in light of Yeshua's sacrifice which is seen to be the substitute for the Torah. I have shown you that Paul did not believe that the Torah was abolished, and at the same time I showed you that Paul did "abrogate" some of it. What we need to understand is that Paul did not desire the Torah to be abolished. His writings might say things to this effect, but these writings were altered for over 400 years by the Gentile Church. It is impossible to read Paul's letters and discern "Paul's religious belief system" unless you also observe his life from the pages of the Book of Acts where it can be shown that**

**Paul was obedient to the Torah and taught the Torah to the non-Jews as well. This paradox has only one answer: the writings of Paul have been altered or "fictitious" accounts created to serve the theological positions of Rome. The only way we can be sure is to "read between the lines in the Book of Acts" to see if Paul was Torah obedient or if he nullified the whole thing in lieu of Yeshua's death.**

**Answer for yourself: Since Paul said he had never been mistaken regarding the laws in the Pentateuch (to the best of his ability), do you see that he could not abrogate and cancel the Law of Moses and still say he has sinned against no law perpetually? Yes I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul say that he had not been mistaken or erred considering any Law in the Pentateuch and the Mosaic Law? Yes. Paul may not of erred but if he relaxed the kosher commandments to the non-Jew then he "erred" toward them.**

**Answer for yourself: Could Paul be mistaken, when he said he never canceled or abrogated any Law in the Torah and Law of Moses, unknowing that he should have canceled them all and caused the Law to pass away? No, for I can't believe he could have been that deceived and used and quoted from the Word of God (Old Testament) so much in teaching the non-Jews while, all along, he secretly knew it should have been discarded.**

**Acts 26:5 Which knew <4267> (5723) me <3165> from the beginning <509>, if <1437> they would <2309> (5725) testify <3140> (5721), that <3754> after <2596> the most straitest <196> sect <139> of our <2251> religion <2356> I lived <2198> (5656) a Pharisee <5330>.**

**Lexicon Greek 196 196 akribestatos {ak-ree-bes'-ta-tos} superlative of akribes (a derivative of the same as 206);; adj AV - most straitest 1; 1**

- **1) exact, careful**
- **2) of the strictest sect: the most precise and rigorous in interpreting the Mosaic law, and in observing even the more minute precepts of the law and tradition**

**Answer for yourself: Did Paul say that he lived his life following one of the most strict sects within Judaism that was accustomed to rigorous adherence and interpretation of Mosaic Law? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that Paul would be proud of observing "the Law" (as Pharisees were known to do) if the Law had passed away? You should.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you not think it strange that Paul would live a life devoted to such a strict sect and yet try to abolish the Law as he was falsely accused? I would think so.**

**Let us look at the Pharisees for a moment.**

**Lexicon Greek 5330 5330 Pharisaios {far-is-ah'-yos} of Hebrew origin cf 06567; TDNT - 9:11,1246; n m AV - Pharisee 100; 100**

- **1) A sect that seems to have started after the Jewish exile. In addition to OT books the Pharisees recognized in oral tradition a standard of belief and life. Some, but not all of the Pharisees, sought for distinction and praise by outward observance of external rites and by outward forms of piety, and such as ceremonial washings, fastings, prayers, and alms giving; and, comparatively negligent of genuine piety. Many prided themselves on their fancied good works. They held strenuously to a belief in the existence of good and evil angels, and to the expectation of a Messiah; and they cherished the hope that the dead, after a preliminary experience either of reward or of penalty in Hades, would be recalled to life by God, and be requited each according to his individual deeds. In opposition to the usurped dominion of the Herods and the rule of the Romans, they stoutly upheld the theocracy and their country's cause, and possessed great influence with the common people.**

**According to Josephus they numbered more than 6000. Some were bitter enemies of Yeshua and clashed with his interpretation of the Torah and his belief system; and were in turn severely rebuked by him for their avarice, ambition, hollow reliance on outward works, and affection of piety in order to gain popularity. But let us never forget that this was only one house of Phariseeism, while the other house of Phariseeism agreed in principle and spirit with Yeshua.**

**Acts 28:17 And <1161> it came to pass <1096> (5633), that after <3326> three <5140> days <2250> Paul <3972> called <4779> <0> the chief <4413> <5607> (5752) of the Jews <2453> together <4779> (5670): and <1161> when they <846> were come together <4905> (5631), he said <3004> (5707) unto <4314> them <846>, Men <435> [and] brethren <80>, though I <1473> have committed <4160> (5660) nothing <3762> against <1727> the people <2992>, or <2228> customs <1485> of our fathers <3971>, yet was I delivered <3860> (5681) prisoner <1198> from <1537> Jerusalem <2414> into <1519> the hands <5495> of the Romans <4514>.**

**Lexicon Greek 1485 1485 ethos {eth'-os}from 1486; TDNT - 2:372,202; n n AV - custom 7, manner 4, be wont 1; 12**

- **1) custom**
- **2) usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite**

**Answer for yourself: Do you see that again Paul's testimony was that he had done nothing against the custom of his Jewish fathers (like teach against the Law)? Yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Having studied this paper, can you now see clearly that Paul never violated the Laws of Moses, let alone forsook them?**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see, better than ever, that Paul never thought or would write anything that could be understood that he advocated replacing the Laws of God with something like grace? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Then can you begin to understand that what we have come to mistakenly understand in contemporary Christianity, that the Law has passed away, is totally alienated from what Paul actually taught, as well as what Yeshua actually taught? I bet you can.**

## SO WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO ME-A CHRISTIAN IN MY CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

**Answer for yourself: If the teaching aspects of the Law has not passed away (only the judicial aspects since Messiah), then are we not still "under" the perfect Law of obedience? Yes.**

***We at Bet Emet Ministries plead with you to share this material with loved ones that they may inherit the fullness of God's salvation by rethinking the message of preachers and Paul, thereby rightly dividing the Word of God that they will one day not stand ashamed before God.***

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner most churches do as it goes to church funds to be distributed how they will (building payments, insurance, bill, utilities, car payments, due, membership fees in organization, fancy dinners, etc), when the Law SPECIFICALLY commands us that 1/3 of ALL of the Tithe is to go totally to the widows, orphans, sick, lame, blind, etc.? We have no right and we sin in contributing to such churches we we let them distribute God's Tithe in such ways instead of obeying the Law of the Tithe that by now you can see never passed away. Don't be deceived any longer!**

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner we do when God's Law SPECIFICALLY commands us that the second 1/3 of the Tithe is to go to you for the observance and celebration of the Feasts of the Lord as found in Lev. 23? We have no right and we sin in contributing to such churches we we let them distribute God's Tithe in such ways instead of obeying the Law of the Tithe that by now you can see never passed away. Don't be deceived any longer! We have no right and we sin in contributing to churches whose church calendars are filled with pagan holidays in which we affix the name of Yeshua to make them look religious?**

**Answer for yourself: Since the teaching aspects of the Law have not passed away, then what right do we have to continue to utilize God's Holy Tithe in the manner we do when God's Law SPECIFICALLY commands us that the third 1/3 of the Tithe is to go to the teaching Levite who today teaches you the truths in God's Word, and not to false teaches who have taught you to rob God? We have no right and we sin in contributing to churches in support of pastors who deceive you because of their lack of adequate study!**

**More in the next article in the series.**

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# HAVE WE MISUNDERSTOOD PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS? #4

**The majority of Christians today have a complete MISUNDERSTANDING of the role of FAITH and its relationship with WORKS. Such is obvious as when the subject of WORKS is brought up most respond "I'm not under the Law I'm under grace" or "I'm saved by grace through faith and not of works."**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever questioned these statements as to their accuracy as you have, more than likely, understood them as they stand alone and not as qualified or enlarged upon by other Scriptures which bring a more complete understanding? More than likely you haven't.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you sure that the above statements "I'm not under the Law I'm under grace" or "I'm saved by grace through faith and not of works" are entirely correct as you have understand them? Don't be so hasty to say "yes."**

**Answer for yourself: Do you ascribe to a "fixed" position on the issue of "faith vs. works" because you have heard the above Scriptures quoted so often by people you respected? More than likely yes.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that "there is more than meets the eye" when considering such passages, and without a fuller understanding you may have been led to an erroneous conclusion in the matter? Most definitely.**

**Answer for yourself: Is it possible that sense you might lack a "fuller" understanding of the doctrine of "faith" and "works," and all the implications that go with such a statements, that you may have arrived at conclusions that cannot be supported by comparative Scriptural analysis? Most definitely.**

**Answer for yourself: And what if you are wrong in your belief system? What if you are shown that certain "works" are necessary as the "fruit" of true salvation, and that in reality that we are NOT saved by faith ALONE...will you let the "full counsel" of God cause repentance in your life and conduct? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: If shown the errors in your belief system will you repent in the matter even though it may go against what your preacher has told you? I hope so.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you certain that you have fully understood "ALL" that the Bible teaches about FAITH and WORKS or have you, like the multitudes of Christians today which "cut-out" one Scripture from their Bible and create a FULL DOCTRINE from that one verse, been possibly incorrect in your understanding of the doctrines of "faith" and "works?" We will have to investigate the matter to be certain.**

**Answer for yourself: Lastly, are you guilty of neglecting other Scriptures that qualify and enlarge the meaning of the original verses given above, and in doing so, have come to erroneous conclusions concerning "faith" and "works" which Yeshua never accepted? This is the very place I was over 15 years ago, and I would have remained there until this day based upon what I heard others say, except I began to do in-depth study of the Bible for myself to see "if these things be so."**

**More than likely, if you are typical Christian in today's world who lacks proper Bible training, study and knowledge; you fall into the latter category. One hour per week is not nearly enough "Bible" for you to "rightly divide the Word of Truth." I will, in this article, show you that without faith it is impossible to please God, but also "faith alone" without "works" does not please God either! I will show you that only "faith" accompanied with "proper works" pleases God and is the only true salvation.**

**Such incomplete understanding of God's Word on our part in these very important areas will not only deceive your thinking but your conduct and behavior as well. Such faulty belief systems will not "save" you if your faith is unaccompanied with the proper works that justify you before God. Please understand the reason Bet Emet Ministries exists. Inadequate Bible study has led multitudes to understand only a "little" of the "whole" of God's revelation to man, thus allowing man to lean on his own understanding which often leads him astray and into sin. Quite often that "little" may satisfy you, but we must satisfy God through proper obedience which is greater than any sacrifice we can bring.**

**Answer for yourself: Could your faulty belief system and erroneous actions (yet done in faith) cost you eternal reward or even eternal life?**

**You will be surprised, like I was, as the findings. So surprised was I, that it changed the whole course of my life while I pastored in one of the largest Charismatic churches in the Metroplex, and eventually led to my resignation. I could no longer, having come to the knowledge of the truth through intense research and study during my pastorate, continue to be a "man-pleaser" but finally mustered the courage to be a "God-pleaser," which in my case, caused me to leave the church which would not repent of error when shown "truths" in the Bible that corrected our "long cherished" beliefs, conduct, attitude, and behavior. The word of God is profitable, for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction. Ideally, the church needs to be a "mirror image" of the Bible, and when corrected by the Bible in its beliefs or actions, she should repent. Failing to do so, I had no recourse to remove myself from such a situation, for when I die I will be judged by a Jewish Rabbi named Yeshua, and not by the pastor of my home church! I suppose the greatest test of my love for God, and His Word is to take a stand for God in which you can truthfully says "let every man be a liar, but let God's Word be true!" In taking such a stand, I come humbly before you to share "hidden" truths in the Word of God that often correct what we have been taught, heard, and often followed as "godly" examples; yet when scrutinized with the Bible, were found to be false-teachings and half-truths. Our love for God demands more and I hope you will prayerfully consider and study these things for yourself, as I did, to make sure that "you be in THE faith of Yeshua", and not a "renegade" which in reality is one who breaks from the mind of Christ and creates a "new religion" which opposes his.**

# QUESTIONS TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

**Let me ask you some very simple questions, but they are of such a nature, that they should change you life.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you have the same religious belief system as did Yeshua, and if you think you do then do you know where it deviated from traditional Christian religious beliefs and dogmas??**

**Answer for yourself: Do you believe everything that Yeshua believed and how can you know unless you are throughly acquainted with Biblical Judaism of the first century?**

**Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua believe a certain way in some matters that you don't as yet, and again how can you know unless you have a working knowledge of first century Judaism?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you believe in things that Yeshua would not, and if so, how can you justify it, and again how can you know for sure unless you do your own homework into these areas since your church has never taught you?**

**Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua believe differently than you do in various religious doctrines, and if you come**

**to the knowledge of the facts of the matter and become convinced that he did for sure, then will you continue in your opposite beliefs since you believe that he is the expressed image of the Father?**

**The honest answers to these questions will definitely alter the course of your life. The only thing lacking is your understanding in these matters of "faith" and the manifestation of such "correct faith" which unfortunately is called by such a negative term today as "works."**

**I plead with those who read this article that you prayerfully listen to what I have discovered over 15 years of in depth study of the Bible, both in Greek and Hebrew. The results of my study altered the course of my life and I hope that it will yours as well. I found, as you will also when you finish these articles and teachings, that as a follower of Yeshua we are to keep the Laws of Yahweh. It is these Laws that describe in detail the "kinds of works" (called obedience to commandments) that are acceptable to God. Such Laws dictate how we are to worship, at what times, in which ways, how we are to tithe correctly as well as how not to, which holy days we are to sanctify and which ones we are not, etc.**

***When the church in Revelation was told that they had left their "first love" notice that they were not told to "hug Yeshua or love more," rather, they were told "GO BACK TO YOUR FIRST WORKS."***

**The reason for so much misunderstanding today in Christendom concerning "faith" and its proper relationship to "works" is due to our *confusion* when reading some of the Apostle Shaul's (Paul's) writings.**

**Some of the Apostle Paul's writings ARE "hard to be understood": as the Apostle Kepha (Peter) stated in II Kepha (Peter) 3: 15-16, saying-**

- **15 And recognize that the longsuffering of *Yahweh* our Savior *is* salvation; just as our beloved brother Paul, in accordance with the wisdom given to him, has written to you,**
- **16 As also in all his letters, speaking in them about these things, *in which are some things HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD,* which those who are UNLEARNED AND UNSTABLE *TWIST, as they* also DO THE OTHER SCRIPTURES. to their *own destruction.***

# APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS IN THE WORD OF GOD?

**Each of us have heard sermons on one or more of the Scriptures that follow, but how many of you have heard sermons which bring into focus and balance these seemingly contradictory doctrines?**

**Answer for yourself: Can the conflicting and opposing Scriptures be rectified so as to bring understanding to the Body of Messiah that will culminate in CORRECT FAITH and OBEDIENCE? Most definitely.**

**Let us examine just some, but by no means, "all" of the troublesome statements from the Apostle Paul found in the New Testament:**

- ***1). For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2: 8***
- ***2). Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus Christ), even we have believed in Yeshua HaMashiach (Christ Jesus), that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. Galatians 2: 16***
- ***3). What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can***

*faith save him? James 2: 14*

- *4). You see then that a man is justified by works, and **not** by faith only (James 2: 24).*

**Answer for yourself: Are we saved by simply having faith in "Jesus Christ" as Christianity teaches, or is there something that we must do to inherit eternal life as the Jews teach? It is vitally important that we understand this question as it effects our very assurance of salvation!**

- *5). For **not** the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (Rom. 2:12).*
- *6). Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight (Rom. 3:20).*
- *7). Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3:28).*

**Answer for yourself: Was it just me or did we see contradictions in some of the above verses? If you missed it then read it again.**

## HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU WHEN YOU READ PAUL?

**Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul said things 180 degrees opposite in meaning when he said a man is justified by works in Rom 2:12, yet in Rom 3:20 he states by the deeds (works) of the law will NO flesh be justified?**

**Answer for yourself: Is this "contradiction" in the New Testament the work of the Holy Spirit which "breathes" inerrant and infallible "Scripture"?**

**I hope so, as this is only the beginning for us if we desire to correctly understand the message of Paul to the Gentile church today. Too often we "pick" and "choose" one particular Pauline passage and build a whole doctrine or denomination over it. Such is foolish.**

**Answer for yourself: Is Paul schizophrenic or is Peter correct, that the writings of Paul are hard to understand? Peter is correct.**

**Answer for yourself: Is the church correct if they teach ONLY justification by faith or is the church correct if they teach ONLY justification by works? Neither**

**Answer for yourself: Could it be possible, as you are beginning to see, that it is both as James, the Lord's brother and hand-picked pastor of Yeshua's church, teaches us in the epistle of James, that faith and works are necessary for a "living faith" that "saves"? I sure hope so.**

## SOMETHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

**The Apostle Peter SAYS that those who are *unlearned in the Scriptures* are the VERY ONES who *twist Shaul's writings to their OWN destruction!* *That was me about 15 years ago until I began to look up the English words in my Bible and compare against Greek and Hebrew meanings in books like Thayer's, Vine's and Wilson's word studies.* No one wants to be destroyed, but if we *follow PREACHERS WHO TWIST SCRIPTURES and* who fail to do the necessary studies like I did, then we, also, will experience the *same destruction that Yahweh has planned for ALL Scriptural LIARS!* Yeshua tells us "what" will befall us IF we follow *BLIND LEADERS,* saying in Mattithiah (Gospel of Matthew) 15:14: Let them ALONE. They are *Blind Leaders of THE BLIND.* And if the blind lead the blind, BOTH will fall into THE DITCH.**

**Yahweh also commands us to STUDY His word, in order to show ourselves APPROVED unto Him...for if we**

**will study (NOT JUST READ) His word, then we will most certainly NOT BE DECEIVED by any of the Scriptural LIES brought forth by *the DECEIVED preachers that fill our pulpits today!* In II Timothy 2:15, we read: STUDY to show yourself approved to Yahweh: a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the WORD OF TRUTH.**

**I am confident that after YOU have finished reading these articles, you will no longer have any questions about "Paul's Writings" AND you will never again be *deceived* by the crafty manipulations of any false preachers either who teach an UNBALANCES MESSAGE concerning FAITH and WORKS.**

**Answer for yourself: Can we be sure that faith is enough to save us in the light of James 2: 24 (You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only)? I don't think so.**

**If there is something that we need to do in order to have eternal life, then we need to know what it is! If we are truly sincere toward God we must find out what part "works" play in God's plan of salvation. However, we want to be sure that we don't become separated from God by trusting in our own righteousness:" You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law (without faith); you have fallen from grace" (Galatians 5: 4) Look it up in your own Bible .**

# DID YOU BRING YOUR SCISSORS TO BIBLE STUDY?

**Actually it is grossly unfair to take a verse from the Bible out of context and use it to prove an argument. I would encourage you to read several verses before and after those quoted. Having done this, you will notice that both sides of the argument use Abraham as an example. Let's look briefly at the story of Abraham from Genesis 22.**

## THE STORY OF ABRAHAM

**"Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him 'Abraham!;' And he said, 'Here I am.'; And he said, 'Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you'. So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.**

**Answer for yourself: Now do you think perhaps that Abraham knew all along that God would not require the life of his son?**

**Answer for yourself: Do you think that he chopped wood, saddled the donkey and set out on his journey, knowing that he was, in some morbid way, humoring his God by pretending to be sacrificing his son?**

**Not at all! For the Angel of the Lord plainly said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." Remember this was a test! If Abraham had been unwilling to kill his son he would have failed that test. God was testing Abraham's ability to keep the very first commandment that he was to later give to Israel. After passing this test, God, swearing by himself, reaffirmed the promises that he previously gave to Abram before Isaac was conceived. And God did so because (note this well) "because you have done this thing, and not withheld your son, your only son, in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven" (Genesis 22: 15-17).**

## ABRAHAM HAD WORKS

**So we clearly see that Abraham had works. His unquestioning obedience is clear. But did Abraham have faith? Hebrews 11: 17-19 tells us "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac(notice his faith was tested in a concrete way that required obedience as a 'work' or a "deed" to substantiate true faith),**

**and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called,' accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense."**

**Answer for yourself: According to the pattern for Abraham, God tests our faith by requiring some PARTICULAR physical deed or action? Always.**

**Abraham did have faith, and it was this faith (in the resurrection) that enabled him to do the "works." Without the faith, he could not have done the works. Faith came first. Faith, then testing, then works, then God's approval. Let me list then in order for you to better understand how God deals with mankind.**

- **First: Faith**
- **Second: Testing**
- **Third: Works**
- **Final: Approval by God**

**It was faith that made him rise early, cut the wood, and set out on his journey. It was faith that CAUSED a certain reactions or response to God and His commandments.**

**Answer for yourself: Can you now see and understand more correctly the Scripture in James 2:22: "Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" I hope so.**

## FAITH..BUT WITHOUT THE PROPER RESPONSE OF FAITH...PROPER WORKS IN THE FORM OF OBEDIENCE ...CAN WE TRULY BE SAVED?

**Suppose Abraham didn't have faith in God to resurrect Isaac, and had refused to offer him up, or suppose Abraham had faith but tried to offered up the wrong son, for example, an Ishmael. He would have had neither faith nor works. So works, of the "justifying" kind, are dependent on faith and the CORRECT response to that which you exhibit faith in.**

***So works, of the "justifying" kind, are dependent on faith and the CORRECT response to faith which you exhibit in the obedience to the Word of God***

## FAITH...THAT RESPONDS IN DISOBEDIENCE INSTEAD OF OBEDIENCE

**Let us look at some examples of responding in faith INCORRECTLY:**

**Answer for yourself: Knowing that God commanded the tithe to be placed in only selected areas in the Bible as seen in Laws and Commandments (1).widows, sick, orphans, lame, blind; 2) Festivals of Yahweh-LORD; 3) Levitical teacher of truths and not errors,); then are we justified as believers if we respond in faith to the commandment to tithe by offering to God in worship an "Ishmael" tithe by giving it to churches which do not obey God in the placement of the tithe, but rather use it in the General Fund for what they please...such as building payments, bills, rent, insurance, fancy dinners, car payments for the pastor, mortgage for the pastor, huge salaries, etc?**

**No!**

## *Such erroneous responses to the Word of God which explicitly commands the way the Tithes are to be allocated does not justify...in fact it is gross disobedience and robbery of God.*

**Our faith is "dead" in that we had faith, we were tested to obey God, we responded in a "righteous work" in giving to the church, yet we missed the mark and such disobedience by the church and those we entrust our money to cannot be accepted by God. We end up being "accessories" to robbery of God. We end up being disobedient whether we planned it or not. We must take the responsibility to make sure our gifts and worship of God in the tithe go exactly where He commands, for God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Begin to "designate" where your offerings are to be used; ie., benevolence and consider giving your Tithe outside the church to areas commanded by the Scripture if your church does not comply with the Word of God.**

**Answer for yourself: Knowing that God commanded that His people, both Jew and Gentile, worship Him in a prescribed manner on certain days which the Bible calls "Holy Days" and "Festivals of the LORD;" then are we justified if we respond in faith to the commandment to set aside certain days unto the Lord but instead of celebrating and observing those required and commanded by God in the Bible we set aside pagan holidays (Ishmael days) that have the name of Yeshua attached to them?**

**No way. Our faith is "dead" in that we had faith to obey, we were tested to obey God, we responded in a "righteous work" and a "righteous deed," yet we missed the mark and cannot be accepted by God in our disobedience. Literally we ended up sanctifying Gentile pagan holidays which have been dressed up with a little "Yeshua" to make it look religiously acceptable. The irony of the whole affair is that the Jewish Scriptures commanded these days not be kept or observed by true worshippers of God. In fact many times in the Bible the Jews were commanded to divorce their Gentile wives if they adhered to such pagan religious days.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you really think you are going to be the "Bride of Christ" one day if you observe such pagan holidays in your church when the Jewish Scriptures forbid that Jews maintain marriages with such ones who would not repent of such paganism and follow the Biblical Festivals?**

## *We must take the responsibility to make sure our worship is according to the pattern set forth by God for His people in the Bible, for our well-intentioned "works and deeds of obedience which is our faith in action," when opposite of what God commands, does not justify us before God.*

**So works, of the "justifying" kind, are dependent on faith and the CORRECT response to that which you exhibit faith in.**

**Answer for yourself: Knowing that God commanded that His people, both Jew and Gentile, to sanctify the Sabbath and make it holy, can we expect to be justified by God if we change the Saturday Sabbath, which is the seventh day, to Sunday, which is the first day of the week, thus breaking the fourth Commandment? No way.**

**Answer for yourself: In each of these examples, and these are only a few, what is the message? You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only (James 2: 24).**

## *But if we do what is contrary to what God said, even if our intention is good, then we miss the mark (SIN) and our faith (although misdirected) cannot save (bless) us*

# FAITH WITHOUT WORKS?

**But can one have faith without works? James 2:17 states ".. faith by itself, if it does not have works (REMEMBER the "works" in question are the "works" required and commanded by God as seen in our obedience to His commandments), is dead." You see the kind of faith that does not show itself with actions, deeds, or works is dead faith.**

**Answer for yourself: Can "dead" faith save you? The answer to that is NO! Living faith saves!**

**Answer for yourself: Now when Paul says in Galatians 2: 16 that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, is Paul referring to "living" faith or "dead faith"? Of course He means genuine living faith, for the scriptures also say that "a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." Therefore, it is by living faith that we are justified."**

# HOWEVER...NOT JUSTIFIED BY WORKS ALONE

**The letter of James is not saying we are justified by works alone. It is however clarifying the word "faith." The epistle of James is preaching justification by faith, but is also making it very clear that "living faith" is the kind that shows itself by "obedient works." Obviously some of those to whom this letter was addressed, were claiming to have a faith that was not shown by their actions, for either their actions were contrary to what God said is to be done, or else they had no works at all. They were offering lip service only. James counsels these people in Chapter 1 verse 22 "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only,deceiving yourselves."**

**Answer for yourself: As Christians do we DECEIVE OURSELVES if we believe the Sabbath has been changed to Sunday, that Roman pagan holidays have replaced Yahweh' Holy Days and Feast Days, and that the Tithe can be used for whatever the pastor and elders of your church decide when we have God's Holy Scriptures that teach otherwise? You bet we do.**

**The letter to the Galatians was not addressed to those who were servants to legalism and trying to be justified by the law. It was written to those who were trying to "turn the grace of God into licentiousness...." (Jude 1: 4). They forgot that there is a balance between "faith" and "obedient works" which is in reality the "fruit of the Spirit," also called "fruits of our faith."**

# WORKS OF THE LAW

**On the other hand, the verses from Ephesians and Galatians were addressed to those who were being persuaded by those of the "circumcision" group who insisted that the Gentiles be circumcised and keep the law of Moses FOR SALVATION. For this reason there is an emphasis on justification by faith and NOT by "works" (Now the "works" referred to in Galatians are the "works of the law," i.e. circumcision for Gentiles which was mistakenly required by SOME Jews for Gentiles to be saved). James corrects this erroneous interpretation in Acts 15.**

**The letter of Galatians was specifically written to those who were seeking justification by the law, not by faith. They were putting their trust in their own ability to keep the law (be circumcised which was a type of "religious work" accomplished by their free will) rather than God's ability to conform them to the likeness of Himself as they responded to their faith in God through "works" as seen in obedience to Laws and Commandments, which when done, led them to live like God, act like God, think like God, conduct themselves morally and ethically like God, thus becoming "Godly." The apostle Paul makes a clear distinction between the "works of the law" and "the good works of faith." He does this by using a completely different term when referring to the good works of faith. Notice in Galatians chapter 5 verse 19, where Paul lists the "works of the flesh." Then in verse 22, in contrast to the evil works of the flesh, he lists the good works of the Spirit. He distinguishes these from the works of the law by using the term "fruit" instead of "works."**

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

**In a Christian's life then we should see the evidence of the good works of faith which is obedience to the Word of God, or as Paul calls it, the fruit of the Spirit. A Christian cannot be "saved" if his life does not show, to some degree, the fruit of the Spirit (obedience to God's Word as seen as the "fruit" of their "faith." That person is deceiving himself.**

**1 John 2: 9 says "He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now."**

# THE ROLE OF WORKS

**Let's look at the role of works in the Christian life. When Paul faced Agrippa, he outlined the gospel that he preached to the Gentiles in this way: "that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance." (Acts 26.20). Paul, in addition to belief in Christ, actually preached works! And it is not surprising, because true repentance is always followed by a changed life. True conversion means turning away from a life of sin to a life of good works. Our "works" cannot be "good" if they contradict what God said He wanted done by His people.**

**This has startling repercussions for Christians today which, for the most part, adopt a contemporary manifestation of Christianity that is totally foreign to the Christianity that existed in the first century church which was an expression of the Torah lived out in a believer's life. By that I mean we have absolutely NO RIGHT to take up the tithe as it is being done in the majority of Christian churches of this land, and use it for all that it goes for. Such well-meaning obedience and worship by sincere lovers of God is totally misdirected when compared with what the Bible teaches the Tithe is to accomplish.**

**Answer for yourself: Is our faith "alive or dead" if we disobey such an important teaching as the Tithe in the Bible, even though we give to our church with good intentions? Dead!**

**Because of the "agendas" of men, the truth about the Tithe seems to never come from the pulpits. Thus we are deceived by our false teachers and therefore we deceive ourselves into thinking we are practicing a "living faith" when we give to the "church." In reality, we practice a "dead faith" and without knowledge of our sin we "rob God" Sunday after Sunday because those we trusted to administer God's Holy Tithe use it in other areas not sanctioned by God in Scripture. There are "certain" areas where Yahweh places His Name and Authority, thus signifying where He desires the Tithe to go. Unfortunately, these areas lay empty (or at least partially empty) because the churches use the Tithe to finance "bigger churches" and "bigger television ministries," instead of using it for benevolence, the worship of the LORD in the celebration and observance of Festivals and Sabbaths. Few are fed, clothed, educated, medically treated, and TAUGHT CORRECTLY; that would issue in their "faith" being verified "by words" commanded by God instead of men. Because of such the Kingdom of God (rulership and Lordship of Messiah as God's authority and representative) never becomes manifested through obedience to the degree intended by our Father in Heaven. Not only does God suffer because of our failure to respond in truth and obedience to His Word, but so do the "poor in spirit."**

**Paul's words in front of Agrippa were no slip of the tongue either, for in 1 Timothy 6:18 he advises Timothy to command the wealthy Christians to "be rich in good works." Again to Titus he says "I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men." (Titus 3:8).**

# NOT BY WORKS BUT "FOR" WORKS

**We are not saved by works but "FOR" good works.**

**Answer for yourself: Are you zealous for good works...the works of God and not the works of men who misrepresent God and His Word to you? I would hope so by now.**

**Then in Ephesians 2:8-10 the subject is fully explained as follows "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."**

**Answer for yourself: Why are we created? Do the works of God (good works) and not the works of men that have caused countless numbers to replace the Commandments of God with the commandments of men as seen above.**

## BY WHAT MEANS?

**Answer for yourself: How do we accomplish good works? How can we overcome our sinful desires?**

**First we need to know that the Commandments and the Law of God are 613 manifestations of "good works". Each mitzvoth reveal an attribute of God. There are 248 positive commands which God is and God does and 365 commands which God is not and which God does not do. Only by faith in God who is able to give us the strength to put to death the deeds of the body by his Spirit are we then empowered to live a God focused and centered life. "For if you live according to the flesh you will die: but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Romans 8:13).**

## LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

**In summary we can clearly see that there is no contradiction in the phrase "justified by works" and "justified by faith." They both harmonize together as shown. We are saved by grace, justified by faith which shows itself in practical "manifestations" of deeds and works; as the fulfillment of the Commandments of the Torah. Such acts of obedience are called the "fruit of the Spirit". Literally we have been created for the good works that God has prepared for us. The Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians chapter 5 cannot occur alone or in a vacuum. If you noticed, they are manifestations of practical deeds of love and righteousness, which is in and of itself, manifestations of our faith.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you better understand that if your works are only "religious" (what your church tells you to do which often corrects and conflicts with Holy Scripture) and not "righteous" (what God tells you to do), then your faith is a "dead" faith (dead faith cannot save you) and not a "living" faith (living faith saves you)? I would hope so by now.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you better understand that if your works are only "religious" works (what your church tells you to do which often corrects and conflicts with Holy Scripture such as observing pagan holidays in Yeshua's name and Sundays instead of the Sabbath; as well as robbing God by giving to institutions that use God's Holy Tithe any way they want to and not the way God wants it used then you have a "dead" faith that is responding in disobedience and not obedience? I hope you do.**

**Answer for yourself: Do you better understand that if your works are not "religious" works but "righteous" works as seen by NOT DOING what your church tells you to do IF IT CONFLICTS with Holy Scripture (such as no longer observing pagan holidays in Yeshua's name even though your church does, but returning to the Holy Festivals of Yahweh, and beginning to celebrate and observe the Sabbath), then your faith is a "living faith" and not a "dead faith?" I believe you are beginning to see the light..**

**Answer for yourself: Do you better understand that if your works are not "religious" works but "righteous" works as seen by NOT DOING what your church often tells you to do IF IT CONFLICTS with Holy Scripture (such as no longer robbing God by giving to your church if the pastor does not distribute the Tithe correctly as**

**commanded by Scripture among widows, sick, lame, blind, the observance of the Festivals, and the support of the Levitical teacher who teaches the uncompromising Word of God and he is faithful to interpret the Bible as was understood by Yeshua in the first century), then your faith is a "living faith" and not a "dead faith?" I would hope you are beginning to see the big picture by now.**

**Let's not be frightened to respond in faith to thereby accomplishing the good deeds that God requires of us: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your "good works" (which are manifestations of God's love through you as you obey the Laws and Commandments of His Word). The result of correct obedience to the will of God through "good works" and not "religious works" will always glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). Man may want the glory but God deserves it! Shalom.**

**If you would like more in-depth teachings concerning the Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith, please contact Pastor Craig Lyons as 972-6756193 and we will be glad to help you begin to understand correctly the Hebrew Scriptures. Shalom.**

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# BET EMET MINISTRIES

## HEBREW FOR HOUSE OF TRUTH

### THE FAMOUS QUOTE OF ST. AUGUSTINE: HOW COULD THERE BE A "CHRISTIANITY BEFORE JESUS CHRIST"?

**Craig Lyons Ms.D, D.D., M. Div.**

**I remember those days in Seminary quite well as they were definitely a turning point in my life; one that I had not expected. First of all I love history and at one time has wanted to be a history teacher when in high school but events would lead me elsewhere. I would end up almost going to Medical School but would reconsider and end up in Pharmacy and would practice this profession for about ten years before entering Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas on the way to my Pastorate. But I never lost my love for history and this love will serve me well when I attended Seminary later in my life. I can remember while in Seminary learning of the Apostolic Fathers of the early church. I, at first, was overwhelmed when confronted with volumes and volumes of written works from the Ante-Nicene Fathers, the writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325, the Nicean Fathers and the post-Nicene Fathers. It would take several years of reading them familiarize myself with not only what they said and taught but to competently follow the chronological synthesis of religious ideas and theology which would develop over these several hundreds of years. But alone the way in my voracious reading and studying of my faith in preparation for my later ministry I was often taken back by what they said. I found that often within their personal writings came confessions of deceit and dishonesty regarding the message that they were leaving the world about Jesus as "the Christ". Some of these Church Fathers and their own declarations on the pages of these early works from these Church Fathers pulled the rug right out from under my "theological feet" and shook my very life. It seemed to me the more that I read that behind all the rhetoric was an "Ancient Story" of which they knew and were but "remolding" for their time and age. It appeared to me that many of them, who addressed this issue, knew quite well of the existence of this "Christ" in the Ancient past and was only retelling the story again for the ignorant laymen of their day. What amazed me more was that some of them thought it sport and jest to teach this "Ancient Christ" and "Jesus" to these ignorant people who knew no better. Equipped with the authority of the Roman Church who held the "keys" of Heaven and Hell and who dosed out large amounts to fear to control the masses it was easy to manipulate the minds of these people and teach them what you will regardless of truth. Understand Rome had a Empire to build an they would use religious ignorance of the vast majority of the illiterate people to build it. This brings me to St. Augustine.**

**Saint Augustine, who became Bishop of Hippo in 395, is touted today as one of the four greatest fathers of the Christian Church. Augustine was born in Tagaste (modern Algeria). He has been called the "most erudite" and the "most prolific" of all the Early Church Fathers and the greatest theologian of all Christian history. Augustine's writings developed the theory on the Church that he is given the designation as "Doctor of the Church". It it time now to look at one of his "writings".**

**One of the great admissions by Augustine in his writings is one which pulls the underpinnings out from under**

**the whole of the "unique" Christian Religion as the "only" path to Heaven which Roman Christianity attests today. I can remember it well when studying Augustine and his theology the passage that jumped out at me like few that I had read in that time of my life. In what I was reading of Augustine one day I was startled by what he said and it stopped me on a dime and I had to re-read it several times to see not only the picture of what Augustine was painting but at the same time identify with his own concern about how could there be Christianity before Christ? I read more I felt the concern and identified with the great mystery of which Augustine had written. I began to see that Augustine, the supposed greatest Church Father ever, had studied this question regarding a "Christianity before Jesus" and answered it accordingly as follows:**

***That which is known as the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist; from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion, which already existed began to be called Christianity. (Retractt. I, xiii,* cited by Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn in his Shadow of The Third Century, Elizabeth N.J.: Academy Press, 1949, p.3). Please take the time to re-read this quote above from Augustine.**

**I wondered at what this astounding quote from Augustine could mean. It would take several years of study on my part to identity exactly what Augustine meant by that quote. He was speaking about Egypt and the Egyptian religion which was a mixture of the Mystical and Mythical representations of Divine Truth given to the earliest of mankind on this planet. Little did I know that my studies would lead me to an exhaustive study of the Ancient Egyptian Religion where I would find the name "Jesus Christ" 10,000 years B.C.E. My mind began to spin with the implications for such a startling reality as I wondered what a "Jewish Rabbi," who supposedly lived some 10,000 years later, had to do with Egyptian Religion. Little did I now then the importance of religious myth and how these Ancient religious myths would later be "literalized" and "carnalized" by succeeding generations which had lost the "keys" to their proper interpretation.**

**Now Augustine wrote around 400 A.D. and mind you this is far removed from the time period supposedly for the "historical Jesus". I would come to see with more study that Augustine "assumes" something that was not in this *"true religion"* which *"already had existed from the beginning of the human race"* which is not true; namely, that nowhere in this "*"true religion"* which *"already had existed from the beginning of the human race"* was there ever a "Karest/Christ" who was to come in "the flesh". Ancient Egyptian Religious Myth in Augustine's day has mistakenly been misinterpreted as it "literal history" and not possessing the "keys" to their proper interpretation the Egyptian KRST, Karest, or "the Christ" was assumed to be a historical personage and the writings of the New Testament show this metamorphosis. This fact alone became a major study in my life to say the least and it would take me several years to get to the bottom of it thoroughly but I did and the fruits of my studies are becoming available in various websites as time permits (Egypt, Astrotheology, and the Sungods and the Descent of the Soul into matter).**

**Augustine's astonishing declaration was made in the early fourth century of our era. It can be asserted with little chance of refutation that if this affirmation of the pious Augustine had not sunk out of sight, but had been kept in open view through the period of Western history, the whole course of that history would have been vastly altered for the better. It is only too likely the case that the obvious implications of this startling passage were of such a nature that its availability to the public was purposely frowned upon by the ecclesiastical authorities in every age. Augustine startling honesty in this quote held the kernel of a great truth the common knowledge of which would have been a stumbling block in the way of the perpetuation of priestly power over the general Christian mind. It would have provoked personal inquiry and disarmed the ecclesiastical prestige of much of its power.**

**Augustine's quote sure set me to studying like I had never before. I was slowly beginning to see that as a Christian my religion and faith might not be as "sure" as I had assumed and the more I pursued such courses of study I found that all I had was a "Swiss cheese Christian theology" which was full of holes. But it was too late for me; Pandora's box was now open thanks to Augustine and I wanted to know what this *"True Religion***

***that had already existed since the beginning of the human race"*** **truly consisted of and I would slowly gather the pieces to this tremendous 18,000 year old puzzle together and in so doing I was equally alarmed and shocked to see that the picture "painted then by these true Ancients of Egypt about the Creator", going way back before 13,000 B.C.E., had been blurred almost beyond belief in my present day with its false presentation of the Egyptian "Karest/Christ" to me through Rome's New Testament and its falsification and misrepresentation of these earlier Ancient Truths in their depiction of the "Jesus Story".**

**The commentary further stated:**

***"For what is it that the Christian saint actually says? It stands as hardly less than a point-blank repudiation of all the chief asseverations on which the structure of Christian tradition rests".*** **Every child born to Christian parents in eighteen centuries has been indoctrinated with the unqualified belief that our current orthodox Christianity was a completely new saving revelation to all of mankind, and therefore was the first true religion in world history and a Divine, unique revelation; that it was given to the world by God himself and brought to earth by the sole divine emissary ever commissioned to convey God's truth to mankind; that it flashed out amid the lingering of Pagan darkness as the first ray of true light to illumine the pathway of evolution for the safe passage of the human Soul. All previous religion was the superstitious product of primitive childishness of mind. Christianity was the first piercing of the long night of black heathenism by the benignant gift of God (John G. Jackson, Christianity Before Christ, p. 1-3).**

## *Nothing could be further from the truth!*

**Finally, the commentary stated:**

**"Augustine shatters this illusion and this jealously preserved phantom of blind credulity. From remotest antiquity, he asserts, there has always existed in the world the true religion. It illuminated the intellects of the most ancient Sages, Prophets, Priests and Kings. It built the foundation for every national religion, the tenets of which consisted of reformulation of its ubiquitous ageless principles of knowledge and wisdom. It went under a variety of designations:**

- **Hermeticism in ancient Egypt;**
- **Orphism in early Greece;**
- **Zoroastrianism in Persia;**
- **Brahmanism in India;**
- **Taoism in China;**
- **The Eleusinian Mysteries in Greece**
- **Mithraism in Rome**
- **Shintoism in Japan and China" (Ibid).**

**Answer for yourself: But I thought all the above religions were "pagan" and wrong and evil and full of idolatry? Well they can be when you lose the "gnosis" and the secrets of how to interpret these higher Divine religious myths that were captured for all of Eternity by these Ancient Spiritualist through the agency of symbol and religious metaphors and symbols. When we look at the above list of supposed "false religions" and read their accounts and "literalize" them as we have done with this supposed "literal" Jesus in the "Jesus Story" then we are guilty of falling into idolatry. But if we possess the wisdom and knowledge and "keys" to these Ancient Religious Myths as these Ancients did, who never looked at these religious myths as "historical" or physically "literal" but only as "allegories expressing higher Divine Truths", then we are awe stuck and taken back by the knowledge and wisdom of these Ancient sages and Priests of God. I cannot describe it as it should be, but I have found little in life as satisfying to my Soul and Spirit as the study of Egypt, the parents of the Jewish nation, and their faith as these higher Ancient Divine Truths come alive to me as I stand startled and amazed at the depth of their knowledge of God when compared to mine growing up with a "literal" Christianity. I have attempted to bring the reader the richness of this knowledge of God possessed, like Moses for example, who grew up in Pharaoh's house. Let me say that I have**

**been breathless by what I have uncovered and seen the Creator as more awesome today than words can covey and sadly this knowledge lays covered with millennia of sand and neglect today with the world's refocus upon Rome and its falsehoods and replacement religion with a "literal godman" instead of the Mystical and Mythical Christ which only lives "within" the bosom of mankind.**

**In no matter what garbled and perverted form, even tribal religionism fostered this *"true" and "already existing religion from the beginning of time".* Christianity as it is taught and practiced today does not! It is a false representation of God's only Divine Truth which He put in the Stars above our heads. I sadly had to admit as I studied the depth of Augustine's quote that as an Ordained Pastor of a mega church in Dallas that I did not have this "true" religion as has mankind down through time until the emergence of the Holy Roman Empire in the 3rd century. Mystery cultism dramatized and ritualized it in many lands. Social usages, all the annual festivals centered around the Equinoxes and Solstices and the personification of the Cosmic Energy/Force of the Sun as a visible symbol for the invisible Energy we know as God. Folktales, tales, traditions, myths, legends, and oral traditions of the common people, carried these "Ancient Truths" down the corridors of time until the 3rd century when Rome will be their extermination along with those who cherished them. Always has this Divine Knowledge as taught by Egypt and successive nations down through recorded history existed among men; never was it not present in the world. Hardly ever comprehended at its real value, its representations badly misconceived, its import warped and travestied at every turn in popular practice, it yet existed and came down to Augustine's day. (Kuhn, Shadow, pp. 3-4).**

**But Augustine was not through as he goes on to say more startling things few have ever heard today.**

***"I would not believe in the Gospel myself if the authority of the Catholic Church did not influence me to do so." Against the letter of Mani, 5,6, 397 A.D.***

**Answer for yourself: Did you read this quote above twice? Is this an admission that Augustine knew that the "literal" Jesus of the Catholic "Jesus Story" was a lie and that only the Mystical and Mythical "Jesus Christ" as a Heavenly Concept was true? Did Augustine know that, as the Ancients had taught since the beginning of time, through both oral traditions first and then later with recorded words on temples, pyramids, and papyrus, that the only true faith given by God was one that expressed unity with the Creator through the Mystical Christ within and the representation of this "Indwelling God/Christ" through the agency of Myth (the Mythical Christ)? It sure appears that he did but few read Augustine today and other men of courage who teach the truth in an age where it could get you killed. Instead, we are relegated to listening to what others have heard preached on cassette tapes by others and assorted such hearsay instead of the truth; never verifying if what we are taught to believe is the truth or not from our personal study.**

**There is an extensive literature on the supposed "Pagan origins of Christianity". Much of this is written by Christians who possess no knowledge of what I speak; therefore denigrating the whole of Ancient Spiritual Wisdom. But most of these works, written by scholars for scholars, never reach the general reader. It is time they do. Email us and we will send you a recommended book list whereby you no longer have to remain in the dark concerning the truth behind the "Jesus Story". We also provide to the interested student a ministry CD containing the study materials from all 13 of our websites. Let us know if you would desire to have one. In the study of this CD the dedicated will see how the "historical Jesus", first used a teaching tool and vehicle to express Divine Truths in the emerging Messianism of Judaism, will dissolve in the light of today's evidence to the contrary and in its place emerge the Divine Truth behind the Mystical Christ within as believed by the earliest Christian, Jewish, and Gentile Gnostics and how these Divine Truths were captured for all Eternity by the Ancients through the medium of religious myth. With acquisition of the "gnosis" and the proper way to interpret these Ancient writings then one sees the puzzle pieces for what they truly are and is capable of recovering the original truths behind the "Jesus Story" as first understood by these Ancient Sages and Priests. This is the way God gave this knowledge to mankind in the beginning and we cannot improve upon it; only belittle it through misinterpretations. Thank you.**

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# PAUL AND JAMES IN OPEN CONFLICT IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

**Apart from the Gospels themselves, the most important book of the New Testament is the Acts of the Apostles. Like all historical documents issuing from a partisan source, not counting that the Book of Acts has more than 6000 discrepancies in the manuscripts we have discovered, it must, of course, be handled skeptically and with caution. One must be aware of whom the text was written for, who it might have served, and what was the end to be achieved by its writing. But it is Acts, much more than the Gospels, which has given us the most informative account of the first years of the Yeshua Messianic Movement or "Early Christianity". Since Acts contains so much basic information not readily found elsewhere, it has established itself as a basic text for understanding the Messianic Movement within Judaism which would later be called "Christianity".**

**Upon through examination of the book of Acts one can see that it is heavily biased. Luke, the author of the text, was clearly drawing on a number of different sources, editing and reworking material to suit his own purposes. Even Church historians and scholars will tell us that Acts was extensively tampered with by later editors (Catholic Monks). In an effort to establish their own authority (Rome) against the authority of Jerusalem, much of the book of Acts was tampered and re-written to achieve certain purposes. Although there is bias, the bias is highly personal, and this, to some extent, enables the modern reader to read between the lines.**

**Although focusing primarily on Paul, who monopolizes the latter part of its narrative, Acts also tells the story of Paul's relationship with the Messianic Community in Jerusalem consisting of Yeshua's immediate disciples under the leadership of James, the Lord's brother. It would be this group who would later come to be called the first Christians and are now regarded as the early or original church. The "original church" was the church in Jerusalem. They set the pattern and standards for all others that followed in their wake.**

**We must realize, if we are to correctly see the whole picture in Acts, that in recounting Paul's association with this community that the Book of Acts offers *only* Paul's point of view of the events of Acts! *Acts is essentially a Pauline document without the balance needed which could only come from James and the other apostles.* It is this "Pauline Picture" which has unfortunately become "NORMATIVE CHRISTIANITY". Paul, in other words, is always the "hero"; whoever opposes him, whether it be the authorities or even James, is automatically cast as a villain. We must never forget that God placed James and the Apostles as leaders in the "original church" and not Paul.**

## LET ME ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS

**Answer for yourself: Where are the Jewish writings of the momentous events that transpired in Acts?**

**Answer for yourself: Why do we lack their perspectives, after all, they were in charge?**

**Answer for yourself: Could their writings possibly have been destroyed by Christians of later centuries (Constantine, etc.)?**

**There is data to substantiate the destruction of many of such documents by the "Early Gentile Church". Gone forever is the balance needed to understand the events of Acts and God's working among His Hebrew Church and His Gentile Church.**

**Acts opens shortly after Jesus, referred to as "the Nazarene" (in Greek "Nazoraion") has disappeared from the scene. The term "Nazarene" has nothing to do with the city of Nazareth, which was built long after Jesus' birth. It refers to "keepers of the Covenant"; Jesus and his followers kept the laws and covenants!**

**Answer for yourself: As a typical Christian are your taught by your Pastor to keep the laws in the covenant?**

**Acts then proceeds to describe the organization and development of the community or "early church" in Jerusalem and its increasing friction with the authorities. The community is vividly portrayed in Acts 2:44-46: "The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared all the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread (Sabbath services)". Notice that the early followers of Jesus adhered to the Temple ritual. Jesus and his immediate followers are usually incorrectly portrayed as hostile to the Temple, where, according to the Gospels, Jesus upset the tables of money changers and incurred the passionate displeasure of the priesthood. Despite the picture given by the Roman slant in the New Testament Jesus is not rejecting his religion!**

**Acts 6:8 introduces the figure known as Stephen, the first official "Christian martyr", who is arrested and sentenced to death by stoning. In his own defense, Stephen alludes to the murder of those who prophesied the advent of the "Righteous One", or "Just One". This terminology is specifically and uniquely Qumranic in character (Dead Sea Scrolls people). The "Righteous One" occurs repeatedly in the Dead Sea Scrolls as "Zaddik". The "Teacher of Righteousness" in the scrolls, "Moreh ha-Zedek", derives from the same root. As portrayed in Acts, then, Stephen uses nomenclature unique and specifically characteristic of Qumran. This shows us the hidden Qumran influence in New Testament theology (http:bennoah1.freewebsites.com)**

**Nor is this the only Qumranic concern to figure in Stephen's speech. In his defense, he names the persecutors (Acts 7:53): "You who had the Law brought to you by angels are the very one who have not kept it." The New Testament reader never stops to notice that this statement is a contradiction of the Torah for the Laws was given by God and not Angels: this angelic belief is a sign of the hidden gnosticism in the New Testament. As Acts portrays it, Stephen is obviously intent on adherence to the Law. Again, there is a conflict here with orthodox adherence to the Law. According to later Christian tradition, it was the Jews of the time who made an austere and puritanical fetish of the Law. The "early Christians" are depicted, at least from the standpoint of that stringency to the Law, as "mavericks" or "renegades", advocating a new freedom and flexibility, defying custom and convention, and being "free from the Law". Yet it is Stephen, the first "Christian martyr", who emerges as an advocate of the Law. This strikes me as strange since the majority of Christians today feel that they are no longer under the "Law".**

**Answer for yourself: Was Stephen wrong?**

***It makes no sense for Stephen, a self-proclaimed adherent of the Law, to be murdered by fellow Jews who also exalted the same Law.***

**Answer for yourself: But what if those fellow Jews were acting on behalf of a Sadducee priesthood which were collaborators in league with the Roman authorities?**

**It was such Jews who wanted to live a simple and quiet life that feared an agitator and resistance fighter in their**

**midst that might lead to Roman reprisals. So understand, that the "Early Church" of which Stephen is a member constantly stressed its own orthodoxy and its zealousness and adherence to the Law.**

**Answer for yourself: Does your church profess a zealousness and adherence to the Law?**

**Answer for yourself: If not why not since this is the picture of the early church before Paul?**

**The "Early Church's" persecutors are those who contrived to remain in league with Rome and, in so doing, were willing to lapse in relation to adherence to the Laws of God. Thus they betrayed the Law. In this context, Stephen's denunciation of them makes sense, as does their murder of him. And we also see James "the Just", the "Zaddik" or "Righteous One" who also best exemplifies rigorous adherence to the Law. It is even more incredible that such a man could lead a group of believers who wished to be delivered from the Law. It would be for his adherence to the Law that he would suffer the same fate as Stephen. You can easily see that we have misunderstood the early church, thus we misunderstand what the church is to be today!**

**According to Acts, it is at the death of Stephen that Paul makes his debut. He entirely approved of the killings and would later engineer precisely the same kind of attack on the "Early Church". Saul, at this stage of his life, is fervent, even fanatic, in his enmity towards the "Early Church." In traveling to persecute believers & totally destroy the church, Paul undergoes some sort of traumatic experience, which commentators have interpreted as anything from sunstroke, to an epileptic seizure, to a mystical revelation (Acts 9:1-19, 22:6-16). Paul interprets the experience as a true manifestation of Jesus, whom he never knew personally. After a three-year apprenticeship in Damascus, he returns to Jerusalem to join the leaders of the "community" there. Not surprisingly, most of them are suspicious of him, not being wholly convinced by his conversion. In Galatians 1:18-20, he speaks of seeing only James and Peter. Everyone else, including the Apostles, seems to have avoided him. He is obliged repeatedly to prove himself, and only then does he find some allies and begins to preach. Arguments ensue, however, and, according to Acts 9:29, certain members of the Jerusalem community threaten him. As a means of defusing a potentially ugly situation, his allies pack him off to Tarsus, the town (now in Turkey) where he was born. He is, in effect, being sent home, to spread the message there. This was tantamount to exile!**

**By the time Paul travels to Antioch, a community of the "Early Church" (a Gentile church) was already established there. It is important to remember that this church originally, as were all the other churches, were under the leadership of James and reported back to the Apostles in Jerusalem. Some five or more years later, Paul is teaching in Antioch when a dispute arises over the content of Paul's missionary work. As Acts 15 explains, certain representatives of the leadership in Jerusalem arrive in Antioch. They, as well as Peter, arrive there with the specific purpose of checking on Paul's activities. They stress the importance of strict adherence to the Law and accuse Paul of laxity. They notice that Paul had been teaching both the Jews that in Christ it was no longer necessary to circumcise your children or follow the Law of Moses. To the non-Jews that in Christ Paul was teaching the complete cessation of the law of Noah as seen in his relaxation of the commandments concerning idolatry which were enforced for example in refusing to eat sacrificed to idols. Paul in I Cor. tells us that this is permissible and only to refrain when in the presence of a weeker brother. Paul and his companion, Barnabas, are ordered back to Jerusalem for a personal consultation with James and the leadership. From this point on, a schism will open and widen between Paul and James; and the author of Acts as he become Paul's apologist (defender). Acts is written to defend Paul by his close friend Luke.**

**Answer for yourself: But let me ask you...who did God give oversight to and put in charge...Paul or James and the Apostles?**

**Answer for yourself: "Who" called "who" back to answer charges?**

***James is the authority and leader of the Messianic Community and not Paul.***

***We fail to balance the accounts and only see a "defense" of Paul in Acts.***

***It is incredible to believe that Jesus gave all authority to his followers and Apostles and is ready now for Paul to correct them all!***

***Surely we interpret Acts by what we have been taught today by pro-Pauline Churches. We should rather let the events of Acts lead us to what we should believe today!***

## CORRECTION: MARCION IS NOT THE FIRST HERETIC...IT IS PAUL

In all the events that follow, Paul is a "Christian heretic" in the eyes of James and the Apostles. James and the Apostles considered many of his teachings (which sadly became the foundation of later Christianity) a flagrant deviation from the "ORIGINAL APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE" as taught by the leadership of the Jerusalem church. Let us never forget that James "the Lord's brother" and the other members of the Apostolic leadership of the "Early Church" not only remembered Jesus but knew him personally, having lived with him during his three year ministry. When these leaders spoke, they did so with first-hand authority. Paul had never had such personal acquaintance with the figure he'd begun to regard as his "Savior". He had only the quasi-mystical experience in the desert and the sound of a voice. For Paul to claim authority to himself on this basis is, in my opinion, to say the least, presumptuous. It also leads him to distort some of Yeshua's teachings beyond all recognition in some areas. This mystical religious experience would lead Paul to formulate his own individual and idiosyncratic theology which he would later legitimize by spuriously ascribing it to Jesus.

## THERE IS ONLY ONE PROBLEM....

Yeshua never believed or taught many of the things that Paul is credited with in the New Testament! Upon study in this area you will see for yourself that often Paul is guilty of preaching "another Gospel" in spite of his own warnings not to do so (or the text was changed and attributed to Paul as original with him). This is little more than a clever literary ploy on Paul's part among the non-Jews who never new Yeshua's true gospel but only's Paul's account of it. They never had the Jewish background necessary to spot the false "gospel." Any of Paul's teachings that contradicts the teachings of Yeshua or the Jerusalem Apostles are wrong! Remember, at the first of the article I told you that Acts has been tampered with more than another book. Not that I wish to blame Paul, but I am confident upon examination through the years that many of Paul's followers altered words and phrases to suit their purposes. Paul could never have disagreed with Yeshua nor every preached another Gospel and be led by the Spirit of God to do so.

**In accordance with the instructions given to him, Paul returns to Jerusalem and meets with Apostolic leadership around AD 48-49. Not surprisingly, another dispute arises. If Acts is to be believed as it stands, James, for the sake of peace, agrees to compromise, thereby making it easier for "pagans" to join the congregation of Israel. Somewhat improbably, he consents to relax certain aspects of the Law for Gentiles, while remaining adamant on others. This is an example of "binding" and "loosing". No longer is circumcision to be required of the non-Jew for inclusion into the Israel of God by the Jesus Movement but that of course did not apply outside the Jesus Movement.**

Paul pays lip service to the leadership. He still, at this point, needs their endorsement; not only to

legitimize his teachings, but to legitimize & ensure the survival of the communities he has founded abroad. He is already, however, bent on going his own way. He embarks on another mission of travel and preaching, punctuated (Acts 18:21) by another visit to Jerusalem. Most of his letters date from this period, between AD 50 and 58. It is clear from his letters that he has, by that time, become almost completely estranged from the leadership in Jerusalem and from their adherence to the Law.

In his epistle to the Galatians (AD 57), he alludes scathingly to the Jerusalem Apostles: "these people who are acknowledged leaders-not that their importance matters to me" (Gal 2:6). His theological position has also deviated irreparably from those who adhere rigorously to the Law. In the same letter to the Galatians (2:16), he states that "faith in Messiah rather than fidelity to the Law is what justifies us, and ...no one can be justified by keeping the Law. Writing to the Philippians (3:9), he states: "I am no longer trying for perfection by my on own efforts, the perfection that comes from the Law..." These are the provocative and challenging statements of a self-proclaimed renegade. "Gentile Christianity", as it will subsequently evolve from Paul, has by now severed virtually all connection with its Hebrew roots by discarding obedience to the commandments of the Torah, and can no longer be said to have anything to do with Yeshua, only with Paul's image of Yeshua.

Following Paul's exposure of his total rejection of Judaism in Antioch we find that by AD 58, Paul is again back in Jerusalem to answer charges again made against him with James despite pleas from his supporters who, obviously fearing trouble again with the Apostle hierarchy, have begged him no to go. Again, he meets with James and the leadership of the Jerusalem community where they express their worry they share with other "zealots of the Law" that Paul, in his preaching to Jews living abroad, is encouraging them to forsake the Law of Moses. It is, of course, a justified accusation, as Paul has made clear in his letters. Acts does not record his response to it. The impression conveyed is that Paul lies, perjures himself and denies the charges against him. When asked to purify himself for seven days (thereby demonstrating the injustice of the allegations and his continued adherence to the Law) he readily consents to do so.

A few days later Paul again runs foul of those "zealots for the Law", who are rather less temperate than James. On being seen at the Temple, he is attacked by a crowd of the pious. "This", they claim in their anger, "is the man who preaches to everyone everywhere...against the Law" (Acts 21:28).

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find it a little preposterous to believe that there were no merit to the charges against Paul in light of the abundant testimony otherwise?**

**A riot ensures, and Paul is dragged out of the Temple, his life in danger. In the nick of time, he is rescued by a Roman officer who, having been told of the disturbance, appears with an entourage of soldiers. Paul is arrested and put in chains on the initial assumption that he is a leader of the Sicarii, the Zealot terrorists. It would be shortly thereafter that a group of angry Jews, forty or more in number, vow not to eat or drink until they have brought about Paul's death.** The sheer intensity & ferocity of this anger is worth noting. One does not expect such animosity, not only violence, from ordinary Pharisees and Sadducees. Those who display it are obviously "zealous for the Law."

What we end up with is two factions within the original community in Jerusalem, the "Early Church". One of these factions consists of "hardliners", who echo the teachings of Qumranic texts and insist on rigorous observance of the Law. The other, exemplified by Paul and his immediate supporters, want to relax the Law and, by making it easier for people to join the congregation, to increase the number of new recruits. The "hardliners" are less concerned with numbers than with doctrinal purity, and seem to have only a passing interest in events or developments outside Palestine. They do not display any desire for an accommodation with Rome. Paul, on the other hand, is prepared to dispense with doctrinal purity. His primary objective is to spread his message as widely as possible and to assemble the largest body of adherents. In order to attain this objective, he goes out of his

way to avoid antagonizing the authorities and is perfectly willing to come to an accommodation with Rome, even to seek favor; even discard or bend the Law if need be. The "end" justifies the "means." Remember, he said that he would become all things (compromise) to win men.

**Answer for yourself: Truly admirable, but at what cost?**

***Today we have churches that carry the name "Yeshua" who are so influenced by Paul (misunderstanding him of course) that they discard not only the Old Testament, the Bible Yeshua used, but the Law and commandments and live in libertinism and unchecked grace. This is not the Gospel of Yeshua.***

The "Early Church", then, as it appears in Acts, is rent by internal schism, the instigator of which is Paul. Paul's chief adversary is James, "the Lord's bother". It is clear that James is the acknowledge leader of the community in Jerusalem that becomes known to later tradition as the "Early Church". For the most part, James comes across as a "hardliner", though he does display a willingness to compromise on certain points concerning the Gentile believers. James' role in the proceedings could not have been excised from the text because his role was too well known.Thus, Luke, in defense of his friend (Paul), plays down James and portrayed him as a conciliatory figure occupying a position somewhere between Paul and the extreme "hardliners" (Zealots).

**So you can now see Acts in a new light. What we have is a clash between two powerful personalities, James and Paul. Paul gets all the press and no one shares with us such depth concerning the perspective of the head of the first church which was James!**

**Answer for yourself: What should be our first consideration before evaluating Acts?**

- 1) James, not Paul, was given custody of the original body of teachings of the "Early Church".
- 2) It was James and not Paul who God made responsible for doctrinal purity and the teaching of adherence to His statutes (Law).
- 3) The last thing James would have had in mind was founding a "new religion" that would stand separate from the mother faith.
- 4) Paul did exactly that. In the conflict between James and Paul, the emergence and evolution of what we call Christianity stood at a crossroads.

.***Had the mainstream of its development conformed to James' teachings, there would have been no Christianity at all as we know it today, only a particular species of Judaism which would have emerged as dominant with Yeshua as it's expected Messiah. This in my opinion is as God would have had it. As things transpired, however, the mainstream of the new movement gradually coalesced, during the next three centuries, around Paul and his teachings. Thus, to the horror of James and Yeshua, an entirely new religion was indeed born; a religion which came to have less and less to do with its supposed founder. Shalom.***

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**1 ¶ Thus saith the LORD: Keep ye justice, and do righteousness; for My salvation is near to come, and My favour to be revealed. 2 Happy is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that holdeth fast by it: that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 ¶ Neither let the alien, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying: 'The LORD will surely separate me from His people'; neither let the eunuch say: 'Behold, I am a dry tree.' 4 For thus saith the LORD concerning the eunuchs that keep My sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and hold fast by My covenant: 5 Even unto them will I give in My house and within My walls a monument and a memorial better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting memorial, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the aliens, that join themselves to the LORD, to minister unto Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast by My covenant: 7 Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. 8 Saith the Lord GOD who gathereth the dispersed of Israel: yet I will gather others to him, beside those of him that are gathered. 9 ¶ All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. 10 His watchmen are all blind, without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; raving, lying down, loving to slumber. 11 Yea, the dogs are greedy, they know not when they have enough; and these are shepherds that cannot understand; they all turn to their own way, each one to his gain, one and all. 12 'Come ye, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.'**

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# THEY WILL LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY PIERCED? FULFILLED OR UNFULFILLED?

**You'll rarely see a Christian Missionary who will use the entire chapter of Zechariah 12 when witnessing to a Jew in the process of conversion. In fact you will rarely see a Christian who quotes from Zechariah 12 familiar with the events of the whole chapter. Usually only chapter 12:10 will be used as way of quotation by Christians in order to "proof text" their point. Let us investigate if such "proof-texting" leads us to the truths God desires we have from the original message of Zechariah.**

**Let us look at the passage from a Christian KJV Bible:**

***Zechariah 12***

***10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.***

**There are two major problems facing the Christian who quotes from this chapter in his Christian Bible:**

- **He does not the accurate Hebrew translation**
- **Rarely, if ever, the Christian is even familiar with the rest of the chapter or the context from which this verse is taken. I used to be like that. I used to cut a verse out of its context and use it to prove whatever I wanted. As I matured I learned that this is not the way of truth but the way of error. I hear Christians continually allude to "they will look upon me whom they have pierced" and let that be the only part of the chapter they will deal with. Such overlooks the context which tells a different story from what they suppose.**

**Let us familiarize ourself with the context.**

**Again as taken from the Christian Old Testament (KJV)**

**Zech 12:1-1**

1. **The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.**
2. **Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.**
3. **And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.**

4. **In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.**
5. **And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.**
6. **In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.**
7. **The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.**
8. **In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.**
9. **And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.**
10. **And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.**
11. **In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.**
12. **12 And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;**
13. **13 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;**
14. **14 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.**

**First of all we must recognize that there is nothing in this chapter that tells us we are even speaking about the Messiah. Nothing in the context tells us we are dealing with the Messiah. So the Christian's claim is that this passage is a reference to Yeshua is very week.**

# HOW DO CHRISTIANS READ THIS VERSE

**10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and *they* shall look upon *me* whom *they* have pierced, and they shall mourn for *him*, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the first "they"? The Christians say that "they" refer to the Jewish people.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the "me" here? The Christians say that "me" refers to Yeshua who is God according to Christian theology.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the second "they"? Christians tell us that this refers to: the Romans who crucified Yeshua.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is speaking here? Christians would tell you that God is speaking through Yeshua.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the "him" for whom they mourn? Christians tell us that Jews will realize that they crucified Yeshua the Messiah and when they realize this they will mourn for their actions.**

**Answer for yourself: Is that what is going on here?**

**The difficulty in this verse is that we have two different pronouns. We have two different people involved in this passage. This presents a problem for Christians who try to read this verse Christologically.**

**Answer for yourself: Who is the "me" and who is the "him"?**

# LOOK AT WHAT THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN DOES TO THIS VERSE FROM ZECHARIAH THROUGH MISQUOTING IT

**John 19:31-37**

- **31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.**
- **32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.**
- **33 But when they came to Yeshua, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:**
- **34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.**
- **35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.**
- **36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.**
- **37 And *again another scripture saith*, *They* shall look on *him* whom *they* pierced. (KJV)**

**John has assured us that another Jewish Scripture said that "they shall look on him whom they pierced."**

**Answer for yourself: Is there anywhere a Jewish Scripture that says that? No!**

# COMPARING ZECH. 12:10 FROM THE JEWISH HEBREW BIBLE WITH THE CHRISTIAN OLD TESTAMENT...YOU WILL BE AMAZED AT WHAT YOU SEE

**If you compare Zechariah in your Christian Bible with the Hebrew Zechariah in the Jewish Bible you will find that the Prophet Zechariah in the Jewish Bible says *"they will look upon ME and mourn for HIM."***

**The following is taken from p. 1423 in the Stone Edition Tanakh which I have found to be the best available translation of the Jewish Scriptures that we can find today for the non-Hebrew speaking student. This great translation has the Hebrew on opposite pages and let me remind you that this is the "text" that was verified in the Qumran and Dead Sea discoveries to be substantially unchanged from the only copies known previously that dated from 900-1000 A.D. That being the case it was always assumed up to then that the Jews had "deJesusized" their Old Testament to write Jesus or any related prophecies out of their texts. The Qumran discovery proves that the older texts of these Jewish Scriptures read completely different from the LXX (Greek translation) in many places are even older than the assumed Septuagint standard. Evidently it was not the Greek which is the standard now but the Jewish Scriptures. This is of major importance for the Christian and follower of Jesus because many of the Old Testament passages can now be proven to not have been "deJesusized" by the Jews but rather "Jesusized" by those who not only translated the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek but who later altered them and "Christianized" them. Understand that the Greek translation was not in reality designed to read Jesus into the texts but write in the solar myths of the Essene cosmic angel-Messiah. It just so happens that much of the Jesus story in the New Testament will be later modeled on this same Essene pattern. We find this "Essene Theology" in the alterations of the above verses as you can see for yourself as you now read the Hebrew Scripture from Zech 12:10 for yourself. Understand that the following is what Zechariah actually said and the above examples from the Christian Old Testaments are the "corrupted" versions.**

***10. I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitant of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplications. They will look toward Me***

***because of those whom they have stabbed; they will mourn over him as one mourns over an only [child[, and be embittered over him like the embitterment over a [deceased] firstborn.***

**A few things we must notice. In this final war the enemies of God and Israel will battle the Jewish people. The Rabbis tell us that God's salvation of Israel in that day will be so complete that people will be astonished if even one man [Jew] is killed by the enemy (Radak). In the above Hebrew verse we find that in this battle the Jewish people will look toward YHVH and even if one of their people is killed then they (the Jews) will look toward YHVH and mourn for "those" [their own people] whom "they" [the enemy that they are fighting] have "stabbed" [killed].**

**Notice that Zechariah does not say that they will look upon HIM whom they pierced but rather they (the Jews) will look upon ME (God) and mourn for him. The quote in the New Testament is completely wrong! The Hebrew of Zechariah teaches us that the looking will be directed toward God. The writer of the Gospel of John changes the pronoun and the whole meaning of the verse! Zechariah has two different people because the original prophet understood the difference between the two different pronouns. John changes it and says "look upon him whom they have pierced" (making the two different pronouns the same).**

***This is a blatant and purposeful misquotation of the prophet Zechariah. The Essene translators of the Prophets in Alexandria, Egypt were wrong! The writer of the Gospel of John is wrong in his quote as well? Where is the truth?***

**In the Hebrew there is a clue in this verse that makes all the difference. Instead of looking upon the one pierced the correct Hebrew states that the Jewish people will look toward God concerning the "him" who is pierced. If you read our series on Isaiah 53 you will have learned that quite often the prophets referred to the corporate nation of Israel in the "singular" by using pronouns like him, he, etc. In keeping with such a literary device we again see the Jewish people are said by the prophet Zechariah to be looking toward God concerning those of their brothers who perished in the final battle after being killed by the non-Jewish nations.**

***The Hebrew, when taken from the Hebrew Bible (not a Christian Old Testament), reads different from the English Old Testaments in the Christian Bible: "They (Jews) will look to me (God)……concerning whom (the Jewish slain) they (Gentile armies) have pierced…….***

**This is a major difference than what John reports. John quotes as if they are looking upon "him" who they pierced. John sees the two pronouns merged into one individual. They look toward who they pierced. The Hebrew from which he supposedly quoted does not say that. Instead of the Jewish people looking on the one pierced, they are looking toward God concerning those of their countrymen who were killed by the Gentile armies. To believe John's misquote is wrong for the reading from John 19 is not what the Hebrew says!**

**Answer for yourself: Why can't John quote the Hebrew of Zechariah correctly?**

**Answer for yourself: But more to the point, why does not the Old Testament of our Christian Bibles have it correct?**

**Answer for yourself: Who is responsible for misquoting the Hebrew of Zechariah in our Christian KJV Bibles?**

**Remember John is supposed to be a Jew and well familiar with his own Jewish Scriptures. Such a one would not make such a gross mistake in mistranslating his own Scriptures. Certainly if John were a Jew he would be most familiar with the ultimate warning as follows:**

**Deut 4:2**

***2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (KJV)***

**Exod 32:33**

***33 And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. (KJV)***

**Knowing these two Jewish Scriptures, and expecting John to know then as well, then I have always struggled to understand why a Jew cannot or would not quote his own Scripture correctly.**

**Answer for yourself: Don't you find that troubling as well?**

# IN HEBREW THE "ONE WHO IS PIERCED" IS NOT THE LONE LOOKED TO!

**God is saying that they will look to ME (God) concerning the one who is pierced.**

**If we remember the context is the final battle of all the Gentile nations against the Jews in Jerusalem, then the one who is pierced is the Jewish people who fight in this battle. Never let us forget the context for when a passage is removed from its context then the private agendas of the ones who remove the passage become the new interpretation.**

**John 19 is describing the crucifixion and not the final battle against the Jews in Jerusalem. Only by ignorance of the context from which the verse is taken that John quotes, or only by disregarding the context can the writer of the Gospel of John hope to have those who read his letter agree with his theology.**

**John 19:31-37**

**31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.**

**Crucifixion, as a means of death, always took a long time for a person to die. Breaking the legs was common because their chest cavity would depress their diaphragm whereby they could not breath and die quickly, otherwise, they could linger alive on the cross for several days. Once their legs were broken they could not support themselves and die quickly. The Sabbath was coming and the crucified needed to die quickly in order to be taken off the cross before the Sabbath.**

**John 19:36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.**

**This is not a prophecy regardless of what Christians say. We are asked to believe the crucifixion was prophesied previously since "no bones could be broken." The paschal sacrifice was never crucified. It was a law that the bones of the lamb could not be broken but this is only a law and not ever intended to be a prophecy of a man who would come later and die through crucifixion. Such is taking great liberty with the verse. Not breaking the legs of a man who was being crucified has nothing to do with the preparation of the lamb at Passover. To draw such a conclusion is very strained to say the least. No where does the Jewish Scriptures say that the Messiah would have his limbs not broken.**

**John would write in 19:34 "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." The writer of the Gospel of John makes an occasion for such a fulfillment by the misquotation of Zechariah 12 as I have already alluded to previously. John would say "they will look upon him whom their pierced." This is the reason Yeshua had to be pierced by a Roman sword. According to John Zechariah 12 was fulfilled in the first century in Yeshua. If this is so then we are expected to believe that the Romans looked upon Yeshua whom they pierced and they mourned for him.**

**Answer for yourself: When did the Romans mourn for a crucified Yeshua?**

**Zechariah 12:10 is not a chapter speaking of events happening 2000 years ago regardless of what John says. Zechariah 12 is clearly an end-time prophecy which has not taken place yet and remains for fulfillment in the end-times.**

**Zech 12:1-14**

- **1 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.**
- **2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.**
- **3 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.**

**Many feel that this is happening in our day as our newspapers testify. It is speaking of a time in the future when the whole world will come against Jerusalem. It surely did not happen in Yeshua' day.**

- **4 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.**
- **5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.**
- **6 In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.**
- **7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.**
- **8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.**
- **9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.**

**So we see that we are speaking about an end-time battle. When the whole world comes up to Jerusalem God will destroy the armies of the world and save the Jewish people. It will be in this time**

**of battle and war that verse 10 of Zechariah 12 will be fulfilled.**

- **10 And I will pour upon the house of David (at this time of battle against the world's armies) and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they [the Jewish people] shall look upon me [God] concerning whom they (their enemies) have pierced, and they shall mourn for him (those Jews killed in the battle), as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.**

***The Jews will be upset because of their brothers killed in this end-time battle. The Jews will look to God concerning those people whom were killed that they loved...their families***

# THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO UNDERSTAND THIS HEBREW VERSE

**In this battle against Jerusalem there will be only one casualty and the Jews will look to God because of this one person who is killed.**

**As we saw in Isaiah 53 the Jewish nations is repeatedly referred to as one entity. All the people who fell in battle is described as a "him" (in the singular). According to the Talmud this verse is referring to one who is the Messiah (a great Jewish leader), one who is the son of Joseph (from the family of Joseph and not David). The Talmud speaks of the death of this great leader who will fall in battle before the coming of the Messiah from David. Such a great leaders' death will influence Israel's repentance prior to the coming of the Messiah.**

**Answer for yourself: Has their ever been a battle where only one Jewish leader died? Did Jesus die in a battle and we not know about it?**

**In the rescue at Entebbe Johnathan Yethinauhau was the only one picked off by a sharpshooter. He was a very charismatic leader.**

**At the death of this great leader the nation is in shock and the purpose of this tragedy is to bring Israel closer to God before the coming of Messiah. This did not happen to Yeshua because he did not fall in battle. In the life of Yeshua Jerusalem was not saved. It was destroyed 40 years later.**

- **11 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.**

**Some other event happened that Zechariah is comparing to.**

**Answer for yourself: To which event does Zechariah allude?**

**One of the most righteous and beloved Jewish kings was King Josiah who fell in battle.**

**2 Chr 35:22-25**

- **22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.**
- **23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.**
- **24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchers of his fathers. And**

**all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.**

- **25 And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations. (KJV)**

**So here the book of Zechariah is making an illusion to the death of another great leader.**

**II Ki 23:28-30**

- **28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?**
- **29 In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.**
- **30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead. (KJV)**

**So, if we return to the Hebrew and discard the misquotation of the verse in the New Testament or even in our Christian Old Testament, and rely on the Jewish Scriptures (from which accurate translation was to always be made), then we find that after the end-time battle of Jerusalem the Jewish survivors will look toward God concerning their slain bothers who fell in battle which had been killed by the non-Jewish armies in this battle. The Jewish people will be looking toward God concerning those who were killed (pierced) and not looking on the pierced. Such is a blatant misuse of the Jewish Scripture, and unless you look this closely, you will never have known this gross adulteration of the Word of God as foisted upon unsuspecting Christians. Shalom.**

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# CONSTANTINE'S EASTER LETTER AND THE LOSS OF THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

**I have up to this point given a detailed account of the apostasy encountered by the early Gentile Church under the influence of Constantine. Why did this man turn from established orthodoxy handed down by the apostles? The answer comes when we see what was in the heart of such a man that caused him to accept certain values and beliefs. We are the recipients of his "false-belief system today." For an example, let us see into his heart as we examine why the Christian Church today celebrates and observes Easter instead of Passover as God COMMANDED!**

## CONSTANTINE I: ON THE KEEPING OF EASTER

**From the Letter of the Emperor to all those not present at the Council. (Found in Eusebius, Vita Const., Lib. iii., 18-20.)**

**When the question relative to the sacred festival of Easter arose, it was universally thought that it would be convenient that all should keep the feast on one day; for what could before beautiful and more desirable, than to see this festival, through which we receive the hope of immortality, celebrated by all with one accord, and in the same manner? It was declared to be particularly unworthy for this, the holiest of all festivals, to follow the custom [the calculation] of the Jews, who had soiled their hands with the most fearful of crimes, and whose minds were blinded. In rejecting their custom, (1) we may transmit to our descendants the legitimate mode of celebrating Easter, which we have observed from the time of the Saviour's Passion to the present day [according to the day of the week]. We ought not, therefore, to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Saviour has shown us another way; our worship follows a more legitimate and more convenient course (the order of the days of the week); and consequently, in unanimously adopting this mode, we desire, dearest brethren, to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews, for it is truly shameful for us to hear them boast that without their direction we could not keep this feast. How can they be in the right, they who, after the death of the Saviour, have no longer been led by reason but by wild violence, as their delusion may urge them? They do not possess the truth in this Easter question; for, in their blindness and repugnance to all improvements, they frequently celebrate two passovers in the same year. *(Oh by the way...if Constantine had read the Bible you would see that God allows for the celebration of Passover exactly one month later for those who were unclean when it was supposed to be celebrated, or who traveled from such far distances that they could not make it in time) Again Constantine is wrong!***

**We could not imitate those who are openly in error. How, then, could we follow these Jews, who are most certainly blinded by error? for to celebrate the passover twice in one year is totally inadmissible. But even if this were not so, it would still be your duty not to tarnish your soul by**

**communications with such wicked people [the Jews]. Besides, consider well, that in such an important matter, and on a subject of such great solemnity, there ought not to be any division. Our Saviour has left us only one festal day of our redemption, that is to say, of his holy passion, and he desired [to establish] only one Catholic Church. Think, then, how unseemly it is, that on the same day some should be fasting whilst others are seated at a banquet; and that after Easter, some should be rejoicing at feasts, whilst others are still observing a strict fast. For this reason, a Divine Providence wills that this custom should be rectified and regulated in a uniform way; and everyone, I hope, will agree upon this point. As, on the one hand, it is our duty not to have anything in common with the murderers of our Lord; and as, on the other, the custom now followed by the Churches of the West, of the South, and of the North, and by some of those of the East, is the most acceptable, it has appeared good to all; and I have been guarantee for your consent, that you would accept it with joy, as it is followed at Rome, in Africa, in all Italy, Egypt, Spain, Gaul, Britain, Libya, in all Achaia, and in the dioceses of Asia, of Pontus, and Cilicia. You should consider not only that the number of churches in these provinces make a majority, but also that it is right to demand what our reason approves, and that we should have nothing in common with the Jews. To sum up in few words: By the unanimous judgment of all, it has been decided that the most holy festival of Easter should be everywhere celebrated on one and the same day, and it is not seemly that in so holy a thing there should be any division. As this is the state of the case, accept joyfully the divine favour, and this truly divine command; for all which takes place in assemblies of the bishops ought to be regarded as proceeding from the will of God. Make known to your brethren what has been decreed, keep this most holy day according to the prescribed mode; we can thus celebrate this holy Easter day at the same time, if it is granted me, as I desire, to unite myself with you; we can rejoice together, seeing that the divine power has made use of our instrumentality for destroying the evil designs of the devil, and thus causing faith, peace, and unity to flourish amongst us. May God graciously protect you, my beloved brethren.**

# THE CONSTANTINE CONSPIRACY

**We at Bet Emet Ministry are aware through the study of history of the compromise which led the institutional church into apostasy (departure from the true faith). We at Bet Emet feel the Lord has called us to awaken those who are asleep to the facts of the terrible apostasy from the faith of Jesus and who are comfortable in their compromise with paganism in the practice of their own faith (mainline Christianity). I do hope this treatise peeks the interests of many, causing more investigation of the subject and more light on the nature of the great apostasy to whom multitudes are not aware. With the intriguing prospect that mysteries and conspiracies of the past can become common knowledge, perhaps more "ordinary" believers like myself will join in the process of the restoration of the truth in these latter times.**

**This anti-Judaism which became anti-Semitism (even anti-Israel), exempted the church, in its opinion, from following the scriptural commands of the Sabbath and the holy feasts, such as Passover. The church equated obedience to these scriptural mandates with following Judaism (called today "being under the Law"). They supposed that since the Jews were so proud of observing the Sabbath and holy feasts, they would be in league with Judaism if they also followed these things. Of course, since many in Judaism (but not all) denied the truth of Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah, the church thought keeping the Sabbath and Passover would be equated as associating with those who deny Messiah (Christ). This, of course, was a false doctrine which overcame the church.**

**Answer for yourself: Have you ever investigated why the Jews reject the "Christian Jesus?" Well, until you do then you will not possess the knowledge that explains why, and once having such knowledge, then your study of the Jesus of the New Testament becomes paramount in your life because the arguments of the Jews are often irrefutable.**

**All Christians and Jews, centuries later, are affected by this apostasy. Most Christians think of Sunday and Easter as biblically mandated holy days and are totally ignorant of this being false doctrine and pagan worship days. Also, there are many Jewish people who think of Yeshua as leader of a Gentile (thusly pagan) religion, forgetting his Jewishness and his defense of the Law as a rabbi. Both mainstream Rabbinical Judaism and mainstream Christianity stubbornly follow their respective traditions,**

**voicing the idea that to do otherwise would leave one "not a Jew" or "not a Christian" as the case may be. The few Christians who faithfully keep the Sabbath and enjoy the Jewish holy feasts are consigned to being a cult by mainstream Christianity. They are mostly not respected as real Christians. The minority of Jewish people who accept Yeshua as Israel's valid Messiah are viewed as traitors and apostate Jews by the mainstream Jewish community. By some they are likened to being non-persons.**

**Thankfully, in response to this dilemma, the Father has raised up the Messianic Jewish Movement. This movement is the joining together of Jewish believers and righteous Gentiles (we prefer the term non-Jewish or Ephraimic believers). This is a union of observant Jews who accept Yeshua as Messiah and non-Jewish believers who keep the Sabbath and enjoy the holy feasts. The effect is a new Israel, a unified holy people who are separated from paganism. We respect Christians because they are followers (ideally) of Yeshua and we respect Jews because they are preservers (ideally) of the commandments of God. Of course, we do believe for our Jewish brothers, to be fully obedient to the commandments, should rethink Yeshua in light of current Biblical studies that have cut through 2000 years of fairy tales. Only when both the Jews and the Christians uncircle their wagons, so to speak, can intelligent dialogue concerning "the prophet" like unto Moses, who Moses commanded to be followed, be accomplished. In addition, we believe in order for our Christian brothers and sisters to fully follow Yeshua they should obey the commandments of the Law, which Yeshua himself kept and said would be kept and taught by those faithful to the Kingdom of God.**

**In many of our writings at Bet Emet we are dealing with the problem of the historical denial of the scriptures by the Gentile church. What I found was that the whole issue of church apostasy comes down to a time and a man who transformed the environment and system in which Christianity and Judaism operated. I propose that the events which culminated in and included the rule of an Emperor named Constantine formed a satanic conspiracy; one that must be overturned by an equally powerful divine conspiracy, prayerfully accomplished in our time.**